THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

HOLLAND

THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

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GREECE
ROME
CARTHAGE
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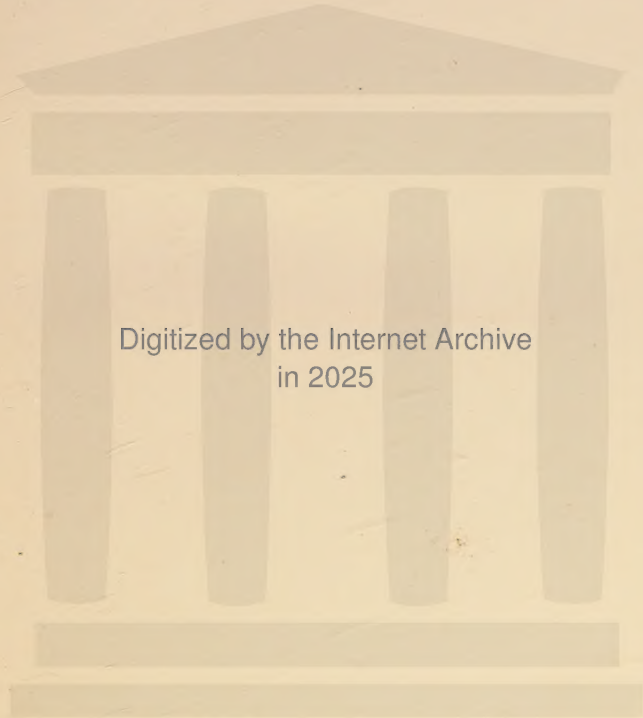
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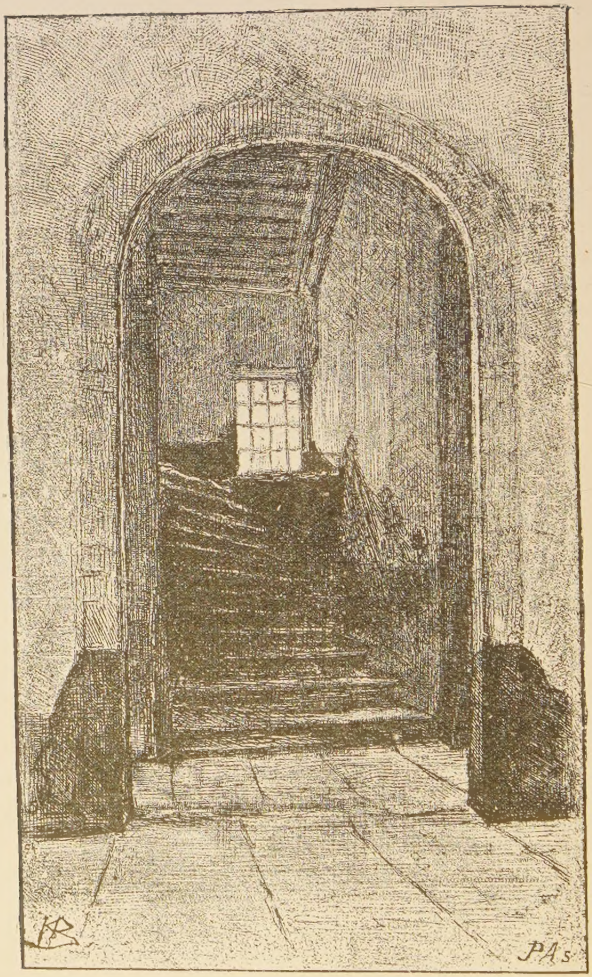

STAIRCASE WHERE GÉRARD ASSASSINATED WILLIAM THE SILENT.
Delft, July 12, 1584. (*See p.* 119.)

43679

The Story of the Nations

THE STORY OF HOLLAND

BY

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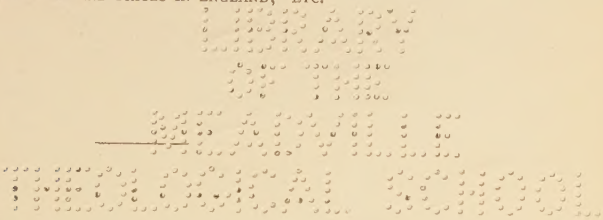

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PREFACE.

THE story which is contained in the following pages is, of necessity, brief, for I cannot go beyond the limits of the series. But it need not be given in great detail. It is possible by a short narrative to recount the principal facts in the greatest and most important of all European wars, that in which the seven provinces of Holland secured their independence against the monarch who was supposed to possess the mightiest powers of the age. Holland was won by its people acre by acre, field by field, against the best European troops of the time, the most practised generals, and what seemed to be boundless resources. The details of the struggle are dry and tedious. The interest in the story lies in the spirit and resolution of the Hollanders, in the tenacity with which they clung to their purposes, in the entire success which attended their efforts, and the great results which followed from the victory which they won, after a war of unparalleled duration. The Spanish king, their foe, represented the two principles of sixteenth-century despotism,

entire authority over the lives and fortunes of his subjects, entire authority over their consciences. The Hollanders resisted him, defeated him, and gave the first precedent for civil and religious liberty.

Their success was the stimulant to similar efforts in other countries. These efforts were not always successful; sometimes, indeed, they were defeated, and governments were apparently all the stronger by reason of the failure in the attempt to control them. But the example of the Dutch was never forgotten, and the prosperity of free Holland was always a stimulant to those other races which struggled for freedom. The Huguenots attempted to follow their example, and failed. The Protestant states of Northern and Central Germany strove to free themselves, quarrelled among each other, and after thirty years of desperate and sanguinary warfare, the battle was drawn. England grappled with the despotism of the Stewarts, put it down for a time, suffered from the effects of a shameful reaction, and finally established constitutional monarchy, *i.e.*, an aristocratic republic, disguised by the fiction of a powerless sovereign.

The precedent of the Dutch revolt was before the minds of those who drew up the Declaration of American Independence. I cannot say that the Colonies would not have resisted the British Parliament after the Stamp Act was passed, even if there had been no history of Holland. But precedents are of the highest value in political action, especially if the precedent is one of signal success. In absolute ignorance of what the result would be, the French Government, which was utterly corrupt, selfish, cruel, and tyran-

nical, intervened on behalf of American freedom, and materially aided the struggle for independence. The inevitable issue of this intervention was the French Revolution. The final overthrow of the French Empire, after it had fought for eighteen years single-handed against Europe was of course followed by reaction. But slowly, very slowly, European races have within the present generation won back some liberties from the dynasties and their tools, and will in the end, if they are wise, win much more from them. The form which their best efforts take is that of nationality, an impulse which may be misdirected by intriguing politicians, but is gradually being educated into definite aims.

I hold it that the revolt of the Netherlands and the success of Holland is the beginning of modern political science and of modern civilization. It utterly repudiated the divine right of kings, and the divine authority of an Italian priest, the two most inveterate enemies which human progress has had to do battle with. At present, the king in civilized communities is the servant of the state, whose presence and influence is believed to be useful. The priest can only enjoy an authority which is voluntarily conceded to him, but has no authority over those who decline to recognize him. These two principles of civil government the Dutch were the first to affirm. They deposed Philip and put the head of the house of Orange in his place, but only as the highest servant of a free Republic. They refused all concessions to the court of Rome, and, very soon after their independence was secured, accepted the principle of religious equality. Holland

was the solitary European state for a long time, in which a man's religious opinions were no bar to his exercise of all civil rights. At the present time, most civilized communities have followed this excellent example.

The student of history is bidden to take notice of the heroic resistance which Athens first, and much of Southern Greece afterwards made to the Persian king twenty-three centuries ago. The resistance which Holland made to the Spanish king was infinitely more heroic, far more desperate, much more successful, and infinitely more significant, because it was a war in which the highest principles were vindicated, and vindicated irreversibly. In those principles, secured by the efforts of a small and, at first sight, of a feeble people, lies the very life of modern liberty. The debt which rational and just government owes to the seven provinces is incalculable. To the true lover of liberty, Holland is the Holy Land of modern Europe, and should be held sacred.

But the debt of modern Europe to Holland is by no means limited to the lessons which it taught as to the true purposes of civil government. It taught Europe nearly everything else. It instructed communities in progressive and rational agriculture. It was the pioneer in navigation and in discovery; and, according to the lights of the age, was the founder of intelligent commerce. It produced the greatest jurists of the seventeenth century. It was pre-eminent in the arts of peace. The presses of Holland put forth more books than all the rest of Europe did. It had the most learned scholars. The languages of the East

were first given to the world by Dutchmen. It was foremost in physical research, in rational medicine. It instructed statesmen in finance, traders in banking and credit, philosophers in the speculative sciences. For a long time that little storm-vexed nook of North-western Europe was the university of the civilized world, the centre of European trade, the admiration, the envy, the example of nations.

Holland, it is true, committed political and commercial errors, which it dearly expiated, of which a malignant use was made by states and statesmen who committed ten times as many crimes. But the annals of Holland are singularly free from deliberate wrongdoing. Its worst acts were defensive, into which it was led by intriguers, such as the judicial murder of Olden Barneveldt, the foolish advocacy of the exiled Stewarts, the shameful murder of the De Witts. But in these doings it was the accomplice of the house of Orange, which after great services led it into disgrace, and finally into ruin. It was an evil day for Holland, when this degenerate family began to marry into the houses of Stewart and Hanover, of Prussia and Russia.

I would have gladly brought the story to a close with the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, after which, by no fault of its own, Holland became of little account in the councils of Europe, and was finally overrun by France. But the facts had to be told, and they are a striking lesson. In the shameful humiliation of Holland, Great Britain, to its dishonour, took the most active part. From the days of Selden down to the days of Canning, it was the policy of British statesmen to pander

to the most sordid instincts of British traders, and to truckle to the designs of the houses of Stewart and Hanover against the independence of the gallant Republic. From their own point of view, that of securing allies on the European continent, the policy was entirely unwise; from the point of view of international morality, it was supremely dishonest.

My principal authorities are Davies, Motley, and especially Wagenaar. The annals of the Dutch nation are exceedingly copious and accurate. I wish indeed that we knew more in detail about the particulars of the great manufacturing towns of Flanders before the revolt of the Netherlands, of the great trading towns of the seven provinces during and after the War of Independence. The publication of such records would be of great interest to those who study the stirring history of the Republic, and follow out the process by which such important results ensued from what seemed to be such inadequate means.

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THE STORY OF HOLLAND.

I.

EARLY DAYS.

THE great river of Western Europe whose head waters are collected in the Lake of Constance, and lose themselves in the German Ocean by a thousand channels, was for centuries the highway of Western commerce and civilization. It was for a long time the north-eastern boundary of the Roman Empire, and many of the cities which studded its banks were the outposts of garrisons of the Roman army. In later times certainly, perhaps even in earlier ages, these cities were enriched by the merchandise which was carried down the stream.

As the Rhine approaches the borders of the country now known collectively as Holland, it begins to divide its stream, and the divisions are multiplied at short intervals. The flow of its waters once rapid is now sluggish. The delta of the Rhine is an accretion from the soil which the stream has collected during its

course. The first Napoleon laid claim to the territory of Holland on the ground that its surface was a deposit from the distant regions in which the earth was collected, was hurried along by the rapid river, and dropped by the sluggish water courses into which the Rhine divided itself. "Now," he argued, "the uplands are mine by right of conquest. The lowlands, which owe their existence to the river which I have appropriated, are mine by right of devolution." One may dispute the logic of the great captain, but the accuracy of his geology is incontestable. Holland is the creation of the Rhine.

DUTCH WINDMILL.

The rest of the Netherlands, now known politically as the Belgium kingdom, is not so obviously the product of great rivers. But the greater part of it is an unbroken flat, suggesting that its area was once a shallow sea from which the waters have retreated. The inhabitants of Holland were, for the most part, of Teutonic origin, as were also those of the western seaboard of the Netherlands. The south-western district was inhabited mainly by a people of Celtic origin. These two races were known as Flemish and Walloon.

In the dawn of history, *i.e.*, for this country, in the days when Julius Cæsar was engaged in extending the Roman Empire over Northern Gaul, and the western tribes of the great Teutonic race, the greater part of

modern Holland was an extensive morass, covered by almost impenetrable forests. From time to time the barrier which the river was depositing against the ocean was invaded by furious storms, and the land was submerged. But the river was always building up what the sea was occasionally destroying, and the earliest instincts of the Hollanders were directed towards the protection of the land on which they dwelt, the land which the sea was always threatening. This land, enclosed between the two principal arms of the Rhine, was called Batavia, and its inhabitants got the name of their country.

After the conquest of the Belgian races, the Batavians became the allies of Rome, at first of the fortunes of Cæsar, and afterwards of the legions which were posted on the German frontier. They remained faithful to the Roman Empire till its final extinction, with only one interval, that occupied with the revolt of Claudius Civilis, a Romanised Batavian, who sought to bring about the political independence of his race. But the revolt was unsuccessful. The Batavian people despaired of success, and fell away from their national leader. He resolved on making terms with his old comrades, and his recent enemies, and to relinquish the cause of those who had no heart to defend it themselves. So he sought a negotiation and an interview. How it was concluded we do not know, for the narrative of the historian is abruptly broken off here, and the sequel of the fortunes of Civilis is irreparably lost to history.

The Batavians aided the Emperor Julian in his victory over the Germans at Strasburg (A.D. 357). Shortly

after this, the inhabitants of the Rhine island, the so-called Batavians, disappear from history, and are merged in the Frisian, perhaps in the Frankish tribes who were now swarming over the Rhine into North-western Europe. The Frankish sovereigns, at any rate, were the nominal sovereigns of what is now Holland. One of these sovereigns, Dagobert II., founded the first Christian church at Utrecht.

Out of the Brabant town of Landen came the family from which Charles the Great was descended. The great-grandfather of Charles the Great began the conquests of the Frisians ; his grandfather all but completed it. The founders of the first two French dynasties were Germans, their language was German, and their administration was entirely Teutonic. The third dynasty, which is of more obscure origin, and survives to our day, is said by some early historians to have also been Teutonic.

The modern Holland, the Batavian inhabitants of which were merged in the Frisian race inhabiting the extreme north-east of the present kingdom, was continuous with Friesland. The great tract now known as the Zuyder Zee was land originally, or had been fenced from the irruptions of the German Ocean. This ocean burst over the land in the thirteenth century, and buried towns and villages permanently beneath its waters. These Batavians and Frisians came under the control of the great Charles, who left them their native customs, they obeying those chiefs whom the Emperor of the West put over them. The laws of the Frisians declare that the race shall be free, as long as the wind blows out of the clouds and the

THE ZUYDER ZEE.

world stands. More than seven centuries after the reign of Charles the Great had come to an end, this charter of freedom was the rallying cry of the Dutch patriots.

The principle upon which the empire of Charles the Great was founded was that the chiefs of the several races subordinated to the central imperial authority should be the emperor's delegates and dependents, but that the several races should be governed civilly by their own traditions or customs. The emperor should have the control of such military forces as the several states or races could furnish, and the deputy, count, or duke as he might be called, was to be answerable to the head of the state for his tribute, or his militia, or for both. In the hands of so vigorous, so shrewd, and so capable a man as Charles the Great, a system of government like this was possible. It was possible in his descendants or successors only if they inherited his capacity as well as his empire. But the descendants of Charles's sons proved themselves as incapable as the descendants of Clovis were, and in a far briefer period of time. Within three-quarters of a century, the emperors of this dynasty ceased to rule, sank into petty chieftains, and were finally superseded in their French dominions by the third dynasty to which I have alluded.

The succession of the French monarchs and the succession of German emperors are equally dated from the rise of the house of Charles the Great. The French historians ignored the kings of the first dynasty, for Louis I. is the son of Charles, just as the Norman sovereigns of England ignored the Edwards

of the race of Egbert. But they recognized as their kings those Germans who nominally ruled as the successors of the great Charles from the Pyrenees to the Ems, and from the German Ocean to the Tiber. So the Holy Roman Empire dates its origin from the coronation of Charles the Great.

Charles the Simple (these latter descendants of the first German Emperor always had uncomplimentary titles) was ruling in 922 over a fragment of the vast empire which had existed a century before, that portion which is contained in the modern Belgium and Holland. In this year, in accordance with the custom which has been referred to above, the simple king created one Dirk the Count of Holland. The descendants of Dirk were in existence during the war of independence, and took the side of the patriots. But Henry the Fowler, Emperor of Germany, had been recognized as the successor of Charles the Simple. In 925, the subjects of the simple king dethroned and imprisoned him, and the Netherlands, as yet loosely connected with what afterwards became France, were as loosely connected with what is known in history as the Holy Roman Empire. We shall see hereafter how slight the bond was.

Part of the policy of Charles the Great was to invest the bishops of the newly converted Frisians, Saxons, and other German tribes with great wealth and great political power. He foresaw in all likelihood how difficult it would be to prevent laymen from making those dignities hereditary, which his policy intended to keep precarious and dependent on submission and good behaviour. But it was otherwise with the clergy.

Their offices were elective or subject to the Crown's nomination. They had no heirs, only successors, and the succession required the royal confirmation. Hence what is known in history as the prince bishoprics were created. These prince bishops for near a thousand years were characteristic factors in the German Empire.

One of these prince bishops was the Bishop of Utrecht. Christianity had been preached especially by English missionaries along the Rhine to the sea. Wilfrid, Willibrod, and Winfrid, the latter known also as Boniface, were the apostles of Germany and the Netherlands. The last of these was the first Bishop of Mainz, and afterwards Bishop of Utrecht. He was slain by the pagan Frisians at the little town of Dokkum in Friesland, and is honoured as the great saint and proto-martyr of Catholic Germany.

FRISIAN GIRL.

In point of fact, the spread of Christianity in these pagan countries entailed great political and pecuniary sacrifices on the converts. Large tracts of land were confiscated in order to form the domain of the new bishops, the dues of the Church were rigorously enacted from landowners whose religion had not hitherto involved such liabilities, and the slaves and vassals of the prince prelates increased with the unsuccessful struggles of the reluctant pagans, for defeat meant

confiscation to the wealthy and slavery to the poor. But in the end, after half the population had been slaughtered in war, the other half submitted to a form of Christianity, which was forcible rather than persuasive. The Bishop of Utrecht became the spiritual chief, and in many particulars the temporal chief of all Friesland. It was not till the great war of independence that an attempt was made to multiply bishoprics in the Netherlands, and when it was made it was in the interests of Philip's tyranny and for the purpose of strengthening the Spanish Inquisition. The character of the Church in the Netherlands must be seen, in order to understand the nature of the great struggle which will, by and by, be narrated.

The two potentates of what in after times constituted the seven United Provinces, the Dutch Republic of later history, and their High Mightinesses, the States-General, were in this early time the Count of Holland and the Bishop of Utrecht. In the rest of the Netherlands, the petty sovereigns became far more numerous. The most important of these were the Dukes of Brabant, and the Earls of Flanders. But there were numerous independent princes of the district now known as Belgium, all privileged to take toll and tax from the people whom they had under their sway. No central authority controlled them, for the German Empire to which they nominally belonged, by reason of its own internal dissensions and its long struggles with the Pope, waxed feebler and feebler, and the French kings had enough to do in their efforts to restrain a turbulent and almost independent aristocracy within their own borders.

This aristocracy was the common and ever-vigilant, ever-conspiring enemy of government, religion, and industry. In these remote times the king was the exponent of the government, the Church of religion, and the town of industry. In order to sustain the first, the doctrine of the divine right of kings was invented; in order to aid the second, the theory of priestcraft was inculcated and enforced ; in order to preserve the third, the charter of the town was purchased. The French and English kings saw how important it was to strengthen themselves against their natural and persistent foes by the aid of the towns, and they granted their towns charters innumerable, the fullest and widest being often conceded by the worst and most unpopular monarchs. If indeed king, Church, and burgher had always been united against the encroachment of the nobles, the victory would soon have been won. But the alliance of what may be called the conservative forces of society against the disturbing and destructive elements was rarely close and still more rarely enduring. The king and the Church were constantly quarrelling, and with varied fortunes, till at last the Church became the willing instrument of despotism, and the king after having reduced the nobles, and employed the Church as his agent, began to pillage and harry those who had been the means for achieving his victory over the other two.

Now there was no king in the Netherlands, not even a lord paramount, but a host of small autocrats, quarrelling for ever among themselves, and therefore at their wits' end for the means of maintaining their own existence and their feuds.

But there is no history in these times, nothing, as Milton said, but the quarrel of the kites and the crows, or as they called themselves in the Netherlands, the Hooks and the Kabeljauws, the grotesque factions of these flats and swamps.

II.

THE RISE OF THE CHARTERED TOWNS.

THE municipal institution of the Roman Empire survived, in many places, the downfall of Rome. Towns whose comparatively free institutions tower above the barbarism of the inroads of Hun, Goth, Frank, and Saxon, still exist, whose rights of local self-government are in succession from the Roman period, though these rights are constantly guaranteed by the grant of fresh charters. These towns were specially numerous in the South of France. They existed in Italy, so long a battlefield for rival invaders. They continued on the banks of the Rhine. Such places as Marseilles and Nismes in France, Milan and Pisa in Italy, Coblentz, Bonn, and Cologne on the Rhine, to quote a few instances out of many, never seem to have lost their local liberties entirely. The life of these liberties may have been feeble, and to all appearance, frail, but it was never extinct. Among the towns of Roman Britain, some survived the dark ages of the Saxon conquest. London is plainly one of these. So are probably York in the north, and Exeter in the west.

The modern towns of the Netherlands cannot be traced back to the Roman Empire. The Belgians and Batavians were not colonized as the greater part of the empire was. Hence the rise of the chartered town was later in the Netherlands than it was in the rest of Western Europe, though when it became a municipality the growth of its opulence was rapid.

The period of the Crusades, in which the Flemish counts took a notable part, was the beginning of a new epoch. The tide of human emigration flowed back for a time from the west to the east, not in the permanent form of a race settlement, but in the transient one of armed hosts seeking one spot by land or sea. The Crusades gave an enormous impulse to trade, and enriched the commercial cities of Italy, such as Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Florence. They elevated the condition of those who survived and returned, for a Crusader gained substantial benefits by his venture. They elevated the condition of those who remained, for the funds needed in order to carry on the expedition were supplied in exchange for local liberties and the right of trade associations. Besides, the exodus left higher wages, higher profits, and more secure institutions for those who laboured at home. The nobles began to see that voluntary grants, and the regular payment of dues from prosperous towns were a more certain source of income than the plunder of impoverished peasants and burghers, and the rapine of what was left to the miserable. Commercial prosperity constantly appears to accompany war, though re-action is sure to supervene. But the liberties which were purchased by solid

gold and silver could not easily be purloined. Besides, the immediate return to violence was not safe or politic. The nobles soon saw that the improvement of their own fortunes and prospects depended on the opulence of the towns which were under their sway.

The form of these early charters is generally the same. The municipal authorities guarantee the fixed dues which they acknowledge themselves indebted in to their lord. In other words, he enters into the enjoyment of a fixed rent charge, secured on the revenues of the city and the goods of the citizens. The lord gives them the right of being tried by their own magistrates; in other words, of regaining a custom which was traditional among all Germanic tribes. These magistrates, mayors, and aldermen in England, Echevins or Schepens in the Netherlands, were at first nominated by the overlord, and for long periods, but were soon elected by the citizens. As was customary, almost universal, offences were expiated by fines, which went to the count or the town exchequer, or even to the local judges. The municipality, in short, was constructed on the model of a manor, wherever in the manor the traditional customs of the people were respected and preserved. Only the strength of the town gave a more enduring guarantee to the grant of local liberties. It was a peculiarity in these towns that the inhabitants were free men. In England residence for a year and a day in a chartered town barred for ever all rights of a lord over his serf.

In order to prevent these towns from becoming a mere asylum for runaway serfs, vagabonds, outlaws,

and the like, the institution of guilds or trading companies was essential to municipal liberties and contemporaneous with them. Every freeman had to be enrolled in a guild. Generally the entrance to this guild was obtained by a seven years' apprenticeship, during which the aspirant to municipal rights underwent a qualified servitude. In most towns, membership in a guild became an hereditary right, descending from father to son. As the town became more opulent, the rights of a freeman were obtained by purchase. In course of time the lesser nobles sought admission into these trading companies, and, at last, even some of the greater nobles. The deans and masters of these guilds eventually monopolized the municipal government, and extinguished the ancient right of free election. It might well be asserted, however, that the process was really elective, more certain to select the most competent men, and more safe than a popular, perhaps tumultuous, election.

Still these Netherland towns might have remained small and struggling municipalities, but for the fortunate concurrence of several facts which, taken together, raised them rapidly to opulence. They became almost suddenly the traders and manufacturers of Northern Europe.

1. The Crusades had developed an extraordinary military activity in Western Europe, had generally suspended war at home, and had greatly stimulated commerce. The spirit of the Crusaders died out, the wars of Europe recommenced, but commercial activity survived. The spices and other goods of the East, sometimes conveyed by overland caravans

GATEWAY OF DELFT.

and through towns, then flourishing, but afterwards destroyed by hordes of barbarians from Central and far Eastern Asia—sometimes by the Red Sea and Egypt—were collected at Venice and Genoa, and thence transmitted to Europe. These goods went over the passes of the Alps to the Rhine, and thence were conveyed down the river way, chiefly to Bruges, the city of the Bridges. It was but a slender rivulet of trade compared with the volume which the Dutch Republic carried, but it was singularly fertilizing. During its continuance, however, Bruges was in the first rank of commercial towns.

2. At an early date, and after the pacification of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, a century or so after these countries had ceased to swarm with the pirates who desolated the shores of Northern Europe and even penetrated into the Mediterranean, a number of towns on the coast of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and the Baltic, associated themselves together for trading purposes and mutual defence under the name of the Hanseatic League. The centre of this league is said to have been Bergen on the coast of Norway; the treasury of the traders to have been Wisby in the island of Gothland. The rapidity with which this league grew and flourished, the favour which it received from princes and prelates, are evidence of the value and volume of the merchandise in which they trafficked, and the magnitude of the markets which they visited. Their factories were planted in or gave occasion to the numerous free towns on the coast of Northern Europe; into the association with which European capitals and cities on the seaboard were

glad to be introduced. The trade of the Hanseatic League was specially in raw materials, and the Netherland towns were eager customers for these materials. Hemp and flax, fur and hides, were regularly transmitted to these towns, and formed the means by which the Flemish burghers monopolized the industry of Western Europe and accumulated their wealth.

3. Perhaps the most important factor in the wealth of the Netherlands at this early period was that it became in one town or another the sole market for English wool, and England in the early ages of Flemish industry was the only country from which this indispensable article could be supplied, at least in any quantity, and the only country also from which it was supplied of good quality. The fact is, England was well-nigh the only European country where the peace was kept, where robbery and violence, such as ran riot in most European countries, owing to the insubordination and ferocity of the nobles, were repressed, and the law by which the farmer's stock was protected was universally obeyed. The writer has read many thousands of farm accounts in the period to which he is referring, and it is rare indeed, in the elaborate and exact enumeration of all farm stock and produce from year to year, that complaint is made of losses by theft or violence. It was not so with the rest of Europe. What was a safe agricultural pursuit in England, was so dangerous and risky on the Continent, that the calling of the shepherd and the rearing of sheep were always rare and often unknown.

Not only was this the case, but the varieties of English wool in quality and therefore in value were numerous. The brands of wool, as merchants would say, were as many, as important, and as variable in value, as the qualities of wine are at the presen time. Now it is true that there were woollen manufactures in England, perhaps sufficient to supply the ordinary wants of most Englishmen, but the skill of the English weaver was far below that of the Flemish. The finest cloths were woven in Flanders, and were thence distributed over Europe.

Friendship with England, therefore, and the uninterrupted import of this prime staple were of the greatest importance to the Flemish towns, and it was the object of the Counts of Flanders to court the good-will of the English sovereigns and people. From the time of the Edwards (1272) to the end of the time of the Tudors (1603) free intercourse with the Low Countries was of profound interest to England and the Netherlands. If this trade were interrupted, thousands of looms would lie idle, and poverty would show itself in the Flemish cities. If it were restored, the same looms would anew become busy, and wealth would be rapidly accumulated.

It was not, however, in woollen goods only that the Low Countries were superior to the rest of Europe. They had a similar reputation in the manufacture of linen cloth. Some of the names of the various kinds of cloth are taken from the country, or from places in the country. Thus serviceable linen for clothing and for table use went by the generic name of Holland. Diaper was the special product of the town of

D'ypres. Linen is described as coming from Brabant and Brussels as well as from other places, and all these articles are high-priced. It is true that sometimes Netherlanders moved over to the eastern counties of England, bringing with them their skill and their looms, but this occurred rarely and fitfully. It was not till the war of independence and the persecution of the Spanish Inquisition fully set in, that the Flemish weavers migrated in thousands to England and carried with them the skill, which rapidly gave England the supremacy in textile manufacture which she still enjoys. The wealth of these burghers was the strength and wealth of their counts, and many a European sovereign was far less securely opulent than these many potentates were who occupied a country which was collectively smaller than any European kingdom.

The dukes and counts of the Netherlands were not slow to discern that the prosperity of their subjects was a matter of profound interest to the nobles, and that the concession of privileges would be a plentiful source of riches and strength to themselves. The communities became practically little republics. In course of time, the towns took common counsel together in assemblies which assisted in the general government. The deputies of the town met the nobles in the gatherings of the provincial estates. What became an early practice in Flanders, was soon adopted in Holland, and the Netherlands became gradually familiar with parliamentary action. But singularly enough, the clergy in the Netherlands did not become one of the estates. The Netherlanders

did not from the beginning care to intrust their liberties to the Church. They were devout enough. They built magnificent churches, and decorated them lavishly. Long before any pictorial art was known in England the Netherlands had their schools of painting, even as early, it seems, as Italy had.

It is true that these cities were quarrelsome and combative. Pent up in these hives of industry and concentrated on their homes, they sometimes justified, by their riotous violence, the interference of their overlords, and the curtailment of their liberties. The ringing of the town bell was the signal of a disturbance—perhaps the occasion of it. But the burghers of Ghent were as proud of Roland, their town bell, as they were of their children. And after all, occasional turbulence was ill exchanged for the despair and misery which despotism at last brought upon this thriving country, when in the end the whole of it fell into the hands of the house of Burgundy, and thence to those of Austrian Spain.

THE CANAL, UTRECHT.

III.

THE HOUSE OF BURGUNDY.

In early days, the dukedoms, countships, and other titles of nobility, coupled as they always were with the lordship over estates, and the inhabitants thereof, were merely official, and were not intended to descend from father to son. But they soon became hereditary, and those who held this rank strove with great success to make themselves independent. In France and Germany, at the beginning of the eleventh century, the king and emperor had less power than many of their nominal subjects. After centuries of labour in this direction, the king of France contrived to bring his nobles into subjection. But at the beginning of the present century, there were nigh upon four hundred independent princes and kinglets in Germany.

At a crisis in French history, the Court lawyers of France declared that women could neither sit on the throne nor transmit a title to it through their descendants. The result of the English claim to the throne of France was a war which lasted for a hundred years, off and on, and a claim to sovereignty

over France which was only relinquished in the present century. From the accession of Hugh Capet (978) to the present time this family has never lacked male descendants. No other such regal house has existed in Europe. In England the royal house has died out on the male side no less than five times, and the inheritance has passed to or through females.

But the great peerages, duchies, and other titles in the French kingdom were not under the so-called Salic law. It was by female descent that the English King Henry II. (1154-1189) possessed or claimed the whole seaboard of France, from the mouth of the Seine to the mouth of the Rhone. A woman, therefore, could transmit the rights of her ancestor over his subjects to a stranger, and thus the marriages of princes have changed from time to time the political geography of Europe. The domains of the house of Austria were built up by fortunate marriages. It was by such marriages that the Netherlands came first into the power of the Dukes of Burgundy, and thence to the Spanish branch of the Austrian line.

The origin of the house of Burgundy, so powerful during the fifteenth century and so tragically concluded, was a grant of that Duchy, the principal town of which was Dijon, made by Louis the Ninth (1226-1270), called the Saint, to one of his younger children. Towards the conclusion of the fourteenth century, this family had become powerful, and exercised a disastrous influence over the fortunes of France. When Charles the Sixth of France became insane (1392), the Duke of Burgundy became regent. He died in 1404. His son murdered the Duke of

of Orleans in 1407, and was himself murdered by the Dauphin in 1419 at Montereau. His son, who goes by the historical name of Philip the Good, most undeservedly, ruled his duchy down to 1467.

This Philip the Good, besides his own duchy, had inherited in the Netherlands the counties of Flanders and Artois. He purchased the county of Namur. He usurped the Duchy of Brabant. He dispossessed his cousin Jacqueline of Holland, Zealand, Hainault, and Friesland, these several counties or provinces having descended to her by the same kind of succession. His dominions extended from the foot of the Alps to the German Ocean, and comprised what was then the wealthiest part of Northern Europe. The original provinces of the Netherlands were seventeen, and he was now overlord of all.

In these times, it became a current doctrine among princes and their counsellors that subjects, especially those engaged in industry, and on whose industry not only the wealth, but the very existence of the country depended, had no rights against their lords. This was the view entertained by the English James, and constantly asserted by him. In pursuance of this doctrine it was held that no plighted word, no promise, no oath was binding on a sovereign, and that a temporary limitation of his powers, declared by him to be perpetual, was no more valid than a pledge given under threats. James vapoured about his divine rights. His son Charles tried to put the thing into practice, with the most disastrous consequences to himself.

In earlier times, the word or the oath of the king was binding. But the Popes, always for a considera-

tion, assumed the power of freeing the king from his oaths, and of holding him harmless if he committed perjury. The English people did not relish the doctrine, and they took short and sharp measures with the two kings, John and Henry the Third, who availed themselves of these pontifical assurances. John would have been deposed, but for his opportune death. Henry would have been deposed, but he was old, and his son, whose word could be trusted, broke with the custom.

As the political authority of the Pope was lessened, the European princes took the option of keeping the pledges which they had made or inherited with their dominions into their own hands. They did not do it in England, for there were some awkward precedents of resistance and deposition which the most masterful and haughty of the English kings remembered and dreaded. A cynical Frenchman of the eighteenth century was wont to say, that on January 30th every European king woke up in the morning with a crick in his neck. There were other days which the English kings thought of before 1649, when they were tempted to tamper with popular liberties.

At the time when Philip, surnamed the Good, acquired the complete and undivided sovereignty of the Netherlands, that country had reached the height of its prosperity, and the full enjoyment of its chartered liberties. The sovereign had his authority. The nobles had their place in the Council. But the municipal authorities, though checked by these two forces, had a solid and substantial influence over both. The form of these institutions was oligarchical, the

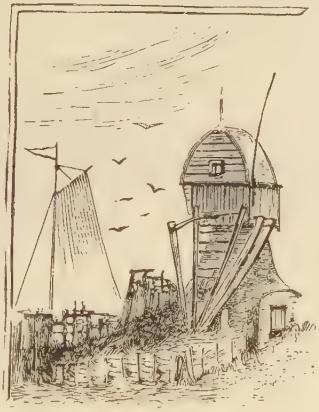
fact was that they were popular, for the burghers were too strong and too turbulent to be disregarded.

In the assemblies of the estates, the authority of the prince was represented by the stadtholder, in the absence of the prince. When the Netherlands were united under one sovereign the stadtholder became a permanent institution, as well as a convenient substitute. He checked the overbold demands of the towns, and asked the estates to grant taxes, or more frequently lump sums to their lords. The nobles voted on the request. The cities, if they had received instructions to do so, bargained as to the grant. If they had not, they claimed a day or an adjournment, in order to consult their principals. Unfortunately the deputies came with limited powers, and the cities were jealous of each other. The engrained habit of municipal isolation was the cause why the general liberties of the Netherlands were imperilled, why the larger part of the country was ultimately ruined, and why the war of independence was conducted with so much risk and difficulty, even in the face of the most serious perils.

It is important here, however, in telling the story of Holland, to mention another fact in the social condition of the country, which found no place in the previous description of its resources and powers. At a comparatively early period, the date of which is uncertain, the Flemish and Dutch fishermen devoted themselves with great success to the herring fishery, and subsequently to improvements in the art of curing them. The merit of these discoveries was ascribed to Beukelszoon of Biervliet in Zealand, who died in

1447. But, on the other hand, the most authentic account of the process makes no mention of the man, but only of the place. It is probable that the reputation of Beukelszoon is due to the fact that Charles V. and his sister paid a visit to his tomb and offered up prayers for his soul.

We cannot in our days imagine how important were the fisheries to our forefathers, and how interested they were in any process which efficiently cured fish. Owing to the absence of nearly all kinds of winter food for animals, except hay, the diet of most persons during the winter was salted provisions. But the discipline of the Church prescribed a fish diet during divers periods of the year, and the consumption of salted fish was enormous. The fisheries of the German Ocean, at first frequented by the Flemings and subsequently almost occupied by the Hollanders, became a mine of wealth, second only to the manufactures and commerce of the Flemish cities. They were also the nursery of the Dutch navy, of those amphibious mariners who struck the first blow for Dutch independence, and became the ancestors of that succession of brave sea captains, who crushed the maritime supremacy of Spain, founded the Batavian empire of Holland in the tropics, engaged in



WINDMILL, HELDER.

an unequal struggle with England, and sustained for a century the reputation of Holland, after its real commercial greatness had declined. Though Holland was constantly in danger from the ocean, it was from the ocean that she derived her wealth and her means for fighting in the struggle for independence. She chose with reason the symbol which she adopted for her flag—a lion struggling with the waves, and her motto, *Luctor et emergo*, "I struggle, I rise."

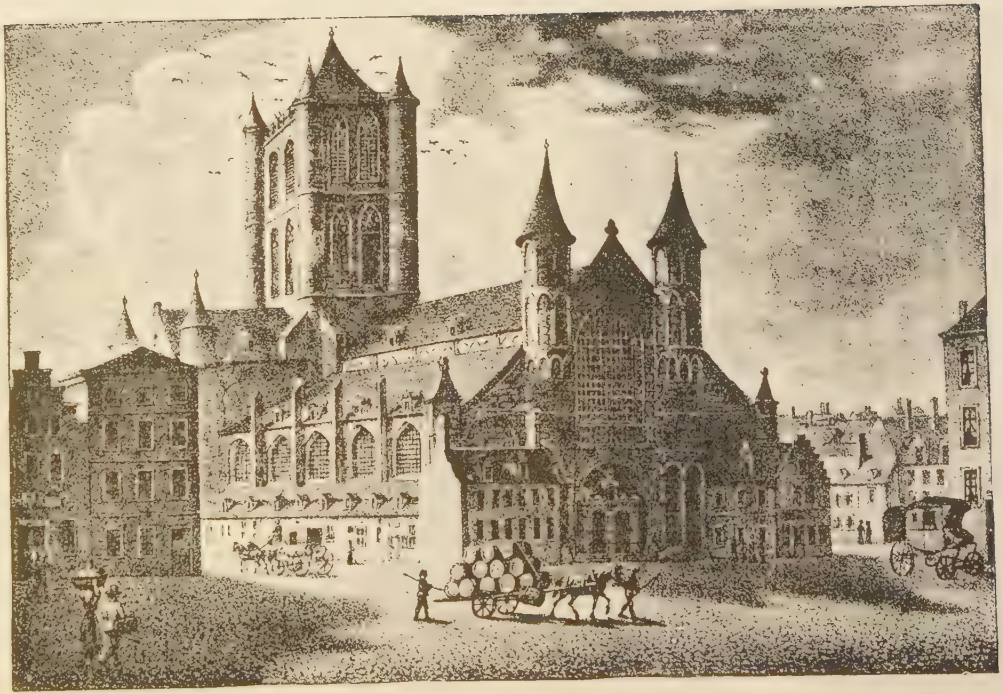
For a time Philip had been the guardian of his cousin Jacqueline of Holland, and in this capacity he had sworn to maintain the privileges and institutions of the Netherlands. But after he had dispossessed his ward, he notified to the cities and estates, through the Council of Holland, that all these oaths were to be deemed null and void, unless he gave them his new and personal confirmation. He held himself bound by no obligation, and acted to the full on the doctrine that there was nothing binding on a prince —a doctrine by no means extinct in the present generation, as European peoples have found to their cost. It may be well to illustrate the action which he took after he had declared this judgment of his own, as to his true position and rights.

The alliance of the English with the Dukes of Burgundy was essential towards their maintaining the position which they won by the battle of Agincourt and the subsequent successes of the Duke of Bedford, who had married Philip's sister. After her death Bedford instantly married a Flemish heiress, as his brother Gloucester had sought the hand of another Flemish heiress, to Philip's great indignation

eight years before (1424). But it was not till after the death of Bedford in 1435, that Philip made his peace with the French king and so virtually expelled the English from Eastern France. In the next year he declared war against England, and appealed to the burghers and nobles of Flanders, for means and men. It was granted or promised, but we may be sure with a heavy heart, for a rupture with England was a serious injury to Flemish industry. It will be seen that their hearts were not in the struggle.

In the early summer of 1436 Philip determined to lay siege to Calais, the port which gave the English an entry at once into France and Flanders. He marched with 14,000 Flemish troops to invest the place, and bade the seneschal of Brabant to close the port by the fleet of Holland. But the fleet was long in coming; Calais was strengthened and provisioned, and the seneschal was forced to retire. The English made a sally, the Flemings fled in disorder, the siege was raised, and Philip was forced to disband his army.

The discontent which followed on this unlucky expedition and on the reprisals which were taken in consequence, excited the most violent disturbances in Flanders. The cities of Ghent and Bruges were conspicuous in their indignation. In the former they killed or banished those whom they believed to have caused the miscarriage of the expedition; in the latter where the Duchess of Burgundy and her young son, afterwards Charles the Headstrong, were residing, they detained them as they were flying, and imprisoned their attendants. When Philip gained an



CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS AT GOUDA.

entry into Bruges, partly by negotiation, partly by a display of force, the insurrection broke out. For a time the duke was confined in the city, and was in great danger. He escaped however, blockaded the city, and with it put a stop to Flemish commerce. At last half-starved and ruined for a time, with the loss of 20,000 persons by famine and pestilence, the city surrendered, paid an enormous fine to their duke, and practically yielded their municipal privileges to his discretion. The Flemings were beginning to find that their prosperity was risked on the intrigues of royal and princely persons. But for some time Philip abstained from further interference in the war.

In 1448 Philip attempted to impose a new tax on salt, by his own will and without the consent of the Estates. The people of Ghent took energetic steps in defence of their liberties. After a struggle of four years' duration, Ghent was reduced to submission was heavily fined and deprived of many of its ancient privileges. "The Flemish city which had long been the centre of Flemish liberties, now fell under a heavy and humiliating yoke." I refer to these facts, in order to show that as the Netherlands were united under one sovereign, the liberties which had been granted to them were imperilled. Meanwhile the Duke of Burgundy had striven to raise a party on his own side among the nobles, by instituting the Order of the Golden Fleece.

IV.

CHARLES THE HEADSTRONG.

PHILIP, misnamed the Good, that crafty, splendid, thrifty duke, died in 1467, and was succeeded by his son, well named Charles the Headstrong (le Téméraire). The father began to destroy the liberties of the Netherlands; the son completed the work—the one with caution, the other with ferocious brutality. Philip had practically held the balance between England and France. His alliance had almost secured the conquest of France by the English, his defection had secured France to the French. But he had done too much harm to France to be really trusted by the French king, and too much service to be ever adequately compensated. In the later years of his life he had given an asylum to the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI., between whom and his father the deepest and most natural distrust existed. Louis XI., who became king of France in 1461, played with matchless cunning against the violence of his quondam friend, Charles, as soon as he succeeded to his dukedom, baffled all his projects,

enticed him to his ruin, and appropriated the French provinces of his only daughter and heir.

The principal object which Charles had before him was to make himself a king, the monarch of a long tract of country which stretched from the German Ocean to the Mediterranean. To this object he clung with a tenacity of purpose which characterized no other of his projects. But he held his dominions under two overlords. The Emperor of Germany had nominal rights over the Netherlands, and according to the law of Europe of that time, and for a long time after, was the sole manufacturer of new kings. Perhaps he might have succeeded in negotiating the matter with Frederic the Third, called the Lazy, who ruled over the German Empire for fifty-three years, only he thought the emperor's son not good enough for his daughter, to whom indeed she was married after the death of Charles.

But he had another sort of person to deal with in Louis the Crafty. For three centuries the French kings had been engaged persistently in securing their dominion over the whole of France, and in putting down the arrogance of their nobles. Philip Augustus had deprived John of half his continental possessions, and would have expelled him from the whole, only John's mother being still alive, he could not deprive her of her inheritance. Charles V., called the Wise, had completed the conquest. Two generations afterwards, and the English kings had not only regained their ancient possessions, but had even been called to the French throne. Again had they been expelled, just before Louis the Crafty had come to the throne.

He was not likely to allow the fundamental principle of the French monarchy, viz., to assimilate and unite to France all that was or had been French territory, to be set at naught.

There was nothing which Louis would not promise or swear. His promises cost him nothing to break as soon as he could break them with safety. His oath was as good as his word, and both were worth nothing. Curious inquirers speculated on what oath would bind his conscience, and professed to have discovered it in a particular title of the Virgin Mary. But there is grave doubt on this subject. Now what could a wild headstrong duke, who took counsel with nothing but his own passions, and turned everything to the objects of his personal ambition, do against this cool, crafty, perfidious monarch, on whom no law, human or divine, had any binding force, who saw so clearly through his rival's designs and could turn even his successes against him? The French nobles stirred up the war of the Public good, and Charles took their part. He vanquished Louis at the battle of Montlhéry (1465) and Louis gained all the advantages of victory. In 1468, Louis took the unaccountable step of throwing himself into the power of his enemy. As he was at Peronne news came of the rising of Liége, and he was imprisoned. He had to make terms with his foe; he seemed to be vanquished, but he came out in the end victorious.

The ambition, the wars, the prodigality of Charles left him no resource but to pillage the Netherlands. His pride, his insolence, his ferocity, displayed in childhood before Bruges, led him to oppress them.

He could not endure the appearance of resistance to his will, or even the possibility of it. He centralized a despotism in Holland, governed the country by his deputies, and taxed it at his pleasure. He removed its supreme court from the Hague to Mechlin, where the Court would be under his control, and he maintained a standing army against the liberties of the states.

The unfortunate constitution of the Netherlanders, destined through the war of independence, and for centuries afterwards to induce weakness in their counsels, and disunion among themselves, aided the projects of Charles, as it did that of Margaret, of Alva, of Requesens, of Parma.

MINARET.

The Flemish towns were practically little republics, though not so in form. They were busy, energetic, populous. But except in the fact that they were eager to vindicate their privileges, they had no other common purpose. Flanders had no national unity ; on the contrary, the several cities were isolated, suspicious, and jealous of each other. It even seems that their commerical rivalry was so keen from time to time, as to make one city such as Ghent or Bruges contented or even pleased at the depression or even ruin of the other. A shrewd and active despot could therefore destroy the liberties of the Nether-

lands, by attacking the cities in detail, being pretty sure that the imperilled liberties, say of Bruges, would not seriously awaken the sympathies or secure the active assistance of Ghent.

Again, though this mischief was not developed till a later day, the Netherlanders suffered from the misfortune of a titled and powerful aristocracy, which though often turbulent, was extravagant, violent, and treacherous. We shall see when we part company with the ten obedient provinces, and confine ourselves entirely to the history of Holland, that the folly, the extravagance, and the treachery of the Flemish nobles was a principal factor in the imperfect success of William of Orange and his energetic son. In the struggle which the Italian republics made for liberty, it was soon discovered that the nobles could not be trusted. They were therefore excluded from all share in the government. In course of time the Florentines went further, and got rid of a turbulent, treacherous, or dangerous citizen, by putting him into the ranks of the nobility and thereby effacing him. It would have been well for the Netherlands had such a policy been adopted in their estates.

At first, Charles the Headstrong treated his Flemish subjects with greater kindness than any of their previous overlords. His father, as has been stated above, declared himself free from the obligations of his predecessors, and from the conditions under which he had entered into their inheritance. There is little doubt that the emissaries of Louis the Crafty stirred up the Netherlanders to demand the restoration of their privileges. He wished to find his most danger-

ous enemy employment, and to prevent him from meddling again in the affairs of France. But at first Charles disappointed him. He was, to be sure, secretly indignant with the people of Ghent, on account of the danger they had put him in, and the promises they constrained him to make. However, he confirmed the privileges of the towns to Ghent, to Brussels, to Brabant, to Antwerp, to Malines, and to a host of others.

This moderation did not last long. The people of Liége rebelled and were subdued. Charles deprived them of their municipal rights, and forced the other Flemish cities to surrender theirs. He superseded their magistrates, and exacted taxes from them without waiting for their consent, or respecting their refusal. The burghers of Liége broke out with a new rebellion, and that at the moment when Louis the Crafty, who was charged, perhaps justly, with having roused this revolt, was in the power of Charles at Peronne, a place where Charles the Simple, a former king of France, had been imprisoned and murdered 560 years before. For a time it was feared that Charles would follow the ancient precedent. But he took counsel, compelled Louis to accept humiliating conditions, and, among other particulars, to renounce all sovereignty over the French provinces of the duchy of Burgundy, and all interference in the affairs of the Netherlands. Louis was forced to comply, and even to take part in the punishment of Liége. From henceforth the Duke of Burgundy found no obstacle to his projects against the liberties of the Netherlanders, and in particular he established a complete military despotism in Holland.

At last Charles the Headstrong quarrelled with the Swiss. He had appointed one Hagembach as his deputy in a district of Alsace which was frequented by Swiss merchants. The deputy plundered them, and Charles paid no attention to the complaints of the Swiss envoys. In 1474, the inhabitants of Brisach captured Hagembach, tried him, and executed him. On November 13th, they first came into collision with the Burgundians, near Hericourt, and routed them decisively.

Charles did not attack them in person till the beginning of the year 1476. On March 3rd, he met them at Granson, near the Lake of Neufchâtel. When the battle had raged near six hours, when no impression had been made on the mountaineers, and some of the best of the Burgundian captains had fallen, the mist which hung over the battle rose, and the astonished army of Charles saw the second division of the Swiss peasants descending upon them, fresh and eager for the fight. A panic seized the Burgundian army; Charles himself was hurried away in the rout, and all his treasure fell into the hands of the Swiss. His diamonds, we are told, were sold by the captors for trifling sums. They imagined that his vessels of gold and silver were copper and tin. Of these diamonds the three largest came ultimately into the possession of the Pope, the Emperor of Germany, and the King of France, and are still in the tiara and crowns of these potentates.

The soldiers of Charles, whom he summoned to his standard by the threat of punishing them as deserters, reassembled at Lausanne, and marched to

Morat, near Berne. Thither the Swiss confederates also marched. On June 22nd, the battle was joined, and the Swiss again defeated Charles, with immense slaughter. Charles again had to fly, and did not draw bridle till he reached the Lake of Geneva.

He was beside himself with rage, and henceforth his actions were those of a madman. He had been twice beaten by peasants whom he despised, and had lost his treasures and artillery. The rich cities of the Netherlands could make good his losses, and he resolved on a third attempt. On October 22nd, he undertook the siege of Nancy. On Christmas Day the Swiss marched to relieve it. On January 5th, he met his enemies and perished. Two days afterwards his body was discovered, or was thought to be discovered, amid a heap of slain, and frozen into a muddy stream. The end of no person in that age was more tragic. He seemed at one time to be the foremost man in Europe.

Louis the Crafty at once despoiled his daughter of her French possessions, and wished to get the guardianship of her and her patrimony in the Netherlands. But the Netherlanders knew the old fox too well by this time. They thought that they might recover their liberties from her; they knew that his rule would be even worse than that of Charles.

V.

MARY OF BURGUNDY.

WHEN tyrants come to violent deaths, there is constantly a belief, engendered of terror, that they are not dead after all, but that they will reappear, to take vengeance on those who have rejoiced at their fate. For a long time there was a persistent belief in ancient Rome that Nero was not dead. For six or seven years many in the Netherlands dreaded the reappearance of Charles the Headstrong.

But most men were convinced of his death. The Netherlanders took advantage of it at once, and claimed even more than their own liberties. They knew that the old fox, who had already occupied Burgundy, was gaping wide for their country. They were willing to assist Mary in retaining her inheritance in the Low Countries. So the Estates were summoned to Ghent in this hour of supreme danger. Of course money was demanded, now with some reason. There was remonstrance indeed, for the States declare that they are impoverished by enormous taxation and ruinous wars—taxation levied in

defiance of their charters—wars undertaken without their consent.

In answer to these demands, Mary granted the "Great Privilege," the Magna Charta of the Netherlands. It was this constitution which Mary's grandson violated, which the Netherlanders took up arms to recover and maintain, which Holland fought for during more than fifty years, and finally secured. It provided that offices should be filled by natives only; that the Great Council and Supreme Court of Holland should be re-established, and should be a court of appeal, having no jurisdiction over the other tribunals; that the cities and estates should hold diets when they chose; that no new taxes should be imposed without the consent of the estates; that no war should be undertaken without the consent of the estates; that the language of the people should be used in all public and legal documents; that the seat of government should be at the Hague; that the Estates should alone regulate the currency, and that the sovereign should come in person before the Estates when supply was required. The Estates also took care that the citizens should be protected against arbitrary imprisonment.

The constitution of the Netherlands, repeated in all the States, is the freest and fullest which any country had attained to or preserved. Perhaps when Mary granted it, and promised to keep it, she meant what she did and said. But whether it was that she bethought herself of that common doctrine of princes in those days, that subjects have no rights against their rulers, that rulers are not bound to speak the truth, or

keep their word, a doctrine by no means dead even in our days; or whether she was persuaded that she had derogated from her dignity in granting what her father had tyrannously withheld, it is certain that she or her counsellors intrigued with the old French fox.

Louis thought it would pay better to betray her counsellors, and to furnish the fact that they were traitors to their country, to their colleagues, and to the Great Privilege. So it came out. They were seized in Ghent, instantly tried and instantly beheaded. The duchess clad in mourning, weeping, with her hair dishevelled, and on foot, besought the burghers to spare their lives. It was in vain. The citizens were not content to accept her apologies, for they had gained their privileges, and were near losing them. The distress of Mary has claimed the sympathy of the sentimental. But it is one of the most inevitable and disheartening results of hereditary rank, that it breeds hereditary lackeys. One result, however, came out of the old fox's perfidy. Mary would have none of his, or those who were allied to him.

She married Maximilian of Hapsburg, son and successor of Frederic the Sleepy, and with the consent of the Netherlanders. Maximilian was a king, soon to be an emperor, with vast necessities and narrow means. He became from time to time the pensioner and the tool of most of the Western kings. He was ever on the look out for money, whatever the source might be signifying little to him, and whatever the conditions might be of procuring it. But his

father lived fourteen years after he married Mary, and she had died nine years before her husband was emperor.

Five years after her marriage Mary of Burgundy died from a fall off her horse, and her son Philip succeeded her, being then four years old. Maximilian claimed to be the guardian of his son, and the governor of the country. But the Flemings refused this arrangement, probably because they had a tolerably clear idea as to how the King of the Romans could fulfil the functions of ruler. In 1488 Maximilian tried to surprise Bruges, where the young Duke was residing. Unlucky for him he was made prisoner himself, had to submit to terms, and give hostages. Unfortunately the Hollanders, and some of the other cities, were more concerned for the young Duke than they were for their liberties, and left Bruges to struggle alone with the King of the Romans. Maximilian borrowed an army from his father, conquered the cities in detail, revoked the Great Privilege, slew the burghers of the towns, and fined the inhabitants for asserting their unquestioned rights. During the time of his regency, Maximilian the Pauper made every use he could of his opportunities, and the Netherlands had to bear the consequences.

In 1494, Philip, now seventeen years of age, became sovereign of the Netherlands. But he would only swear to maintain the privileges granted by his grandfather and great-grandfather, Charles and Philip, and refused to acquiesce in the Great Privilege of his mother. The Estates acquiesced. For a time, Friesland, the outlying province of Holland, was severed

from it. It was free, and it chose as its elective sovereign the Duke of Saxony. After a time he sold his sovereignty to the house of Hapsburg. The dissensions of the Estates had put them at the mercy of an autocratic family.

Philip of Burgundy, in 1496, married Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. In 1500 his son Charles was born, who was afterwards Charles the Fifth, Duke of the Netherlands, but also King of Spain, Emperor of Germany, King of Jerusalem, and, by the grant of Alexander the Sixth, alias Roderic Borgia and Pope, lord of the whole new world. Joanna, his mother, through whom he had this vast inheritance, went mad, and remained mad during her life and his. Charles not only inherited his mother's and father's sovereignties, but his grandfather's also. No wonder that he aspired to universal dominion, and that his son Philip of Spain laboured during his whole life to secure it.

The peril which the liberties of the Netherlands were now running was greater than ever. They had been drawn into the hands of that dynasty which, beginning with two little Spanish kingdoms, had in a generation developed into the mightiest of monarchies. Ferdinand married Isabella. He was king of the little kingdom of Arragon, she heiress of Castile. They had two daughters, Joan who married Philip of the Netherlands, Catherine who married first Arthur, and afterwards Henry of England. Ferdinand and Isabella conquered the whole of Spain and in a way united it. The queen aided Columbus in his discovery of America. The Pope

Alexander the Sixth, himself a Spaniard by descent, bestowed by his Bull, the whole of America, *i.e.*, the West of the Atlantic on Spain, and the whole of the East of the Atlantic on Portugal. There was just this excuse for Alexander's Bull, that Portugal and Spain were the pioneers at the time of maritime discovery in the East and West respectively ; for Spanish enterprise discovered the new world, Portuguese enterprise doubled the Cape of Good Hope. As yet, however, no one anticipated what these discoveries and grants would lead to. Moreover, though with growing hesitation, Europe still respected the authority of the Pope, and did not feel inclined to question his grants of sovereignty over distant countries.

WINDMILL.

CHARLES V.

VI.

CHARLES, COUNT OF FLANDERS AND EMPEROR.

CHARLES succeeded his father Philip as Count of Flanders in 1506. His father, Philip the Handsome, was at Burgos in Castile, where he was attacked by fever, and died when only twenty-eight years of age. Ten years afterwards Charles became King of Spain (1516). When he was nineteen years of age (1519) he was elected emperor. The three nations over whom he was destined to rule hated each other cordially. There was antipathy from the beginning between Flemings and Spaniards. The Netherlands nobles were detested in Spain, the Spaniards in the Low Countries were equally abhorred. Again the Spaniards entreated Charles not to accept his election to the German throne. Charles had employed his Flemish nobles in Spain, and they had disgusted the Spaniards by their ambition and rapacity. The Spaniards feared that they would become a mere outlying province of the German Empire, and be plundered by German adventurers.

Charles was born in Flanders, and during his whole

career was much more a Fleming than a Spaniard. This did not, however, prevent him from considering his Flemish subjects as mainly destined to supply his wants, and submit to his exactions. He was always hard pressed for money. The Germans were poor and turbulent. The conquest and subjection of the Moorish population in Spain had seriously injured the industrial wealth of that country. But the Flemings were increasing in riches, particularly the inhabitants of Ghent. They had to supply the funds which Charles required in order to carry out the operations which his necessities or his policy rendered urgent. He had been taught, and he readily believed, that his subjects' money was his own.

Now just as Charles had come to the empire, two circumstances had occurred which have had a lasting influence over the affairs of Western Europe. The first of these was the conquest of Egypt by the Turks under Selim I. (1512–20). The second was the revolt from the authority of the Papacy in Germany.

Egypt had for nearly two centuries been the only route by which Eastern produce, so much valued by European nations, could reach the consumer. The road through Russia had been blocked by the conquest of Russia by the Tartars. The roads through Central Asia had been similarly obstructed by the savages who had overrun and destroyed the ancient civilization of that region. There remained only the sea passage from India to the Red Sea, a short caravan journey from the western shore of that sea to the Nile, and the transit thence to the Mediterranean. But the trade, of which the Nile was the

carrier, was not the only important fact in the trade of Egypt. There were flourishing manufactures in Alexandria and Cairo. In particular, sugar was cultivated, extracted, and refined in the former town, with such success and abundance that its price fell, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, to less than an eighth of what it stood at in the beginning of the fifteenth.

Now this trade, trifling to be sure to our present experience, was of the highest importance to the trading towns of Italy, the Rhine, and the Netherlands. It was the source of nearly all their wealth to Venice, Genoa, and Florence, to Nuremberg, Coblentz, Cologne, and Bruges, and a hundred other towns. The decay of the Italian cities immediately commenced, and that of the German towns followed. The presence of the Turk in Egypt immediately caused the ruin of all its manufactures and trade. The risk of their invasion was the principal stimulant of the voyages which were undertaken by Columbus and Vasco di Gama.

The destruction of the Egyptian trade produced serious effects in Southern Germany. The German nobles, infinite in number, for titles descended to all the offspring of ennobled persons, had improved their incomes by entering into the guilds and sharing the profits of the burghers. When the profits fell off, because the trade dried up, they strove to compensate themselves by taxing their peasants. This led to the peasants' war, its frightful excesses, and its relentless suppression. The German peasant was thereafter as much oppressed as the French roturier was.

So the Flemish towns which had engaged in the Eastern trade suffered. But the Netherlands had two industries which saved them from the losses which affected the Germans and Italians. They were still the weavers of the world. They still had the most successful fisheries. The policy which led Henry the Seventh of England to grant the commercial treaty, known as the Great Intercourse, to the Flemish towns was maintained by his successor. It was at first undertaken in order to rid England of the perpetual plots which were hatched in Flanders by the Yorkist exiles; it was continued, because it redounded to the manifest benefit of both the nations.

LOBSTER NET.

The other cause was the revolt against the papacy. In the fifteenth century the power of the papacy was greatly weakened, and the sovereigns of Europe, who, a few generations before, had trembled at the Pope's threat, now undertook to set his house in order by means of general councils. But, as soon as they had established external decency and unity in the Church, they saw that the Pope might become the invaluable ally of despotism. They wished to strengthen their own authority over nobles and people, and they obtained in this effort the assistance

of Rome. But they had no mind to dissent from the doctrine of the Church, or to allow their subjects to do so either. They formulated the doctrine that the subject should be of the religion of his ruler, and they acted on the theory for generations. This was the principal reason why the European sovereigns insisted on conformity, and visited those whom they were pleased to call heretics with severer punishments than they inflicted on traitors.

It cannot be by accident that the most successfully industrious parts of Europe have been, with but one notable exception, hostile to the established religion. The heresies of Toulouse, the most prosperous part of Europe in the twelfth century, were the first occasion of the Inquisition, and were rooted out with fire and sword. In England the Norfolk weavers were the principal disciples of Wiklif, and more men and women perished in that county by the stake, than in all the others put together. Before the days of Luther and Calvin the Flemish spinners and weavers were constantly at war with the Church, and were constantly exposed to its wrath. The exception is Italy. But Italy, though it constantly quarrelled with the Pope, was notably enriched by his presence and by the contributions which the faithful poured into his treasury.

When the Reformation was an accomplished fact, it took two forms—that of Luther in Germany ; that of Calvin in the Netherlands and France. These sects agreed in hostility to Rome, but differed in nearly everything else, till at last Lutheran and Calvinist came to be as bitter foes to each other as

Rome was to both. The cause of this is not far to seek.

Luther threw off the yoke of Rome, but practically transferred the authority of the spiritual to the temporal prince. All that the Pope lost the Prince gained. The interests of rulers and the doctrine of the divine right of kings were served by the acceptance of Lutheranism. The subject's allegiance was not divided between Pope and King, but transferred as a whole to the latter. When Henry the Eighth made himself supreme head of the Church, he carried out to a logical conclusion Luther's doctrine in State and Church. Hence, though there was no compromise between Rome and Luther possible, it was very possible for temporal sovereigns to accept Lutheranism, and to profit thereby. Lutheranism became the State religion of Northern Germany, of Scandinavia, and of Denmark. It powerfully affected England, though it was not accepted there in its entirety.

But the teaching and discipline of Calvin was essentially democratic, even republican. The minister of religion was a preacher, but much more a tribune of the people. The Calvinist hated the Pope, but he was no friend to king or noble. Hence, from the very first, there was war between King and Calvinist. "No bishop no king," said James the First of England, himself bred under a Calvinist discipline. The French Calvinists, often noble, were suspected, and with reason, of designs against the monarchy. The burghers of the Netherlands and the peasants of Scotland were persecuted, not only because they

disavowed the divine right of priests, but because they were believed to discredit the divine right of kings. The Calvinist enemy of the Church was held to be the Calvinist advocate of a democratic republic. This was proved in Holland, in England, and finally in the United States. Philip the Second saw, and avowed that he saw it, that the success of the Calvinist preachers would not only be the destruction of the Church which he clung to, but of his own power, which he still more passionately loved. With similar objects, his great-grandfather, Maximilian, wished to unite the Papacy and the Empire in the same person, that person being himself.

If Erasmus of Rotterdam had possessed the courage of Luther, or the opinions and constructive genius of Calvin, the Reformation would have begun in Holland. But the learned man was too timid. He fled from the storm into Switzerland, and died there.

Charles was not slow to persecute the Reformers in the Netherlands, though he had to temporise with them in Germany. But the former country was his patrimony; in the latter he was only an elective sovereign, with rights limited by the powers of the independent princes of the empire, and he therefore could not do as he pleased. Under the rule of his sister, the Dowager of Hungary, Regent of the Netherlands, the persecution of the sectaries was organized in that country. There was no part of the world in which so many persons were put to death for their religion as in the Netherlands.

When he was fifteen years of age, Charles limited the franchises of Ghent by the document known as

ERASMUS.

the Calfskin. The Great Privilege of Mary of Burgundy had been already abrogated by Maximilian. Now Charles, being in straits in 1539, demanded a subsidy of 1,200,000 florins from the Netherlands, 400,000 of which was to be subscribed by the citizens of Ghent. The burghers claimed that the grant could be made only by the unanimous consent of the Estates. The Emperor was carrying on war in France, in Sicily, and in Milan at once, and the Netherlanders were unwilling to contribute to a war in the conduct of which they had no interests whatever. Even the Spaniards resented the Emperor's appeals for money.

But the men of Ghent broke out into insurrection. They offered themselves to Francis of France, who betrayed their correspondence to Charles. So Charles resolved on chastising them. They did not resist him on his approach. He entered the city, kept his intentions secret for a month, and then solemnly annulled all the charters, privileges, and laws of the city, and confiscated all the property of the guilds and corporations. He exacted the subsidy which he demanded, added 150,000 more to it, and imposed a fine of 6,000 florins a year on the city for ever. Of course, a number of persons were executed. Finally, he sat in judgment on the famous Bell Roland, the tolling of which summoned the burghers to their assemblies, and ordered it to be immediately taken down. Having destroyed the constitution, having fined all the citizens and executed many, he forgave Ghent, because he was born there.

VII.

THE ACCESSION OF PHILIP OF SPAIN.

CHARLES resigned all his crowns on October 25, 1555, he being then between fifty-five and fifty-six years of age. The ceremony, carefully elaborated, took place in the great hall of the palace of Brussels, the capital of the Duchy of Brabant. Charles, Philip, and Mary, the Dowager Queen of Hungary, were present, the last-named having acted as Regent of the Netherlands and the instrument of Charles's government for twenty-six years. The Emperor came into the hall, leaning on the arm of the Prince of Orange, who is known to all time as the ever-famous William the Silent.

It was a most brilliant assemblage. The Knights of the Golden Fleece, an order instituted by Philip the Good, were present, and among them, or with them, were those Flemish and Holland nobles who were destined to play so conspicuous a part in the coming struggle. Besides Orange, the father of Dutch freedom, and the principal personage in the long struggle which was soon to begin, were Horn

PHILIP II.

and Egmont, Berghen, and Montigny, the Bishop of Arras (afterwards Cardinal Granvelle), Brederode, Noircarmes, and Viglius. Most of these men—indeed, most of those who were witnesses to the abdication—were to perish by one violent death or another in the course of a few years.

Charles was a broken man. His vigorous constitution had yielded to the excesses of his life and the labours of his long career. He was such a victim to gout that he could hardly stand without assistance. The deformity of the lower jaw, which he inherited, and which reappeared in his descendants, and was said to have been originally transmitted to the Hapsburg family from a Polish princess, had almost deprived him of the power of eating and talking. Charles, unlike his father, was never handsome, and advancing years had increased the ugliness of his visage.

His career, after all, had been a failure. In his youth he had been the great captain of his age, and had proved his military genius in numerous battles. Up to middle age he might have been called Charles the Fortunate. He had been victorious in Italy and in France. He had almost crushed the Protestants. Then the tide turned. He was humiliated before Metz. He was beaten by Maurice of Saxony and obliged to fly, disguised, from Innspruck, the cradle of the house of Hapsburg. He had been obliged to concede the Peace of Passau, and with it the establishment of the Lutheran creed in the North of Germany. The Pope had turned on him, and the son of Francis I. of France had foiled him. The Grand

Turk, the Pope, and the Protestants were leagued against him. It was time that he should leave the work to younger and, as he hoped, stronger hands. He would, it is true, have gained the German crown for his son if he could, but this came to be the portion of Ferdinand, his younger brother, and the two houses of Hapsburg were severed, never to be united.

Philip the Second, to which these territories and kingdoms were to be transferred, was a slight, lean man, twenty-eight years old, below the middle height, with weak legs and a narrow chest. He did not possess in the least his father's energy and vigour, his military and political powers. In face like his father, he had the same Austrian deformity in his lower jaw. His father could speak any language in Western Europe with fluency ; Philip could not speak any other tongue than Spanish. Charles was constantly talking ; Philip was habitually silent. Charles could be boisterous in his mirth ; Philip was sullen and retiring, and was hardly known even to smile.

The Prince of Orange was at this time twenty-two years old. The place from which the hero of Dutch independence took his title was situated in the South of France, near Avignon, and the family were originally vassals of the Pope, who was for centuries the Lord of Avignon. But they had migrated to the Netherlands, and had filled high offices under the Burgundian princes. The Prince of Orange was a noble who not only held the highest rank in the Netherlands, but was the head of a most opulent house. He was at the time Commander-in-chief on the French frontier, where he was matched against

WILLIAM I.

Admiral Coligny and other great generals. It is remarkable that the stadtholders of the house of Orange furnished the republic with a succession of seven eminent generals and statesmen in unbroken order for nearly two centuries, from William the First of Orange to William the Fourth.

In the oration which Charles made before his Estates, he dwelt on the labours of his life and the difficulties which his waning health put on him. He could not grapple with the situation, but must leave it to younger and more vigorous hands. He entreated Philip, his successor, to maintain the Catholic religion in all its purity, as well as law and justice. In commending the Estates to their new lord, he implored them to show due obedience to their sovereign, dwelt on their obedience and affection in time past, asked their pardon if he had committed any offence or fallen into any error during the time of his rule, and assured them that their welfare should be the object of his prayers during the remainder of his life. It is said that the audience was melted to tears.

The reign of Charles had been one long crime against his subjects. He had trampled on their liberties, wasted their resources by inordinate taxation, and had established the Spanish Inquisition among them. He had an annual revenue of five millions, two of which were extorted from the Netherlands, and squandered on objects which were of no concern to them. But the cruelties which he practised in the name of religion were incredible in their atrocity and number. Great authorities allege that the Netherlanders who were burned, strangled, beheaded,

and buried alive under his orders amounted to a hundred thousand. The Venetian ambassador reckoned that ten years before his abdication Charles had put to death for their religion no less than thirty thousand persons in Holland and Friesland alone.

There is no reason to believe that Charles persecuted for any other reason than policy. He had no more morality than the rest of European sovereigns, for, with all his activity, his life was a long licentious debauch. His son Philip was, in the current sense of the word, religious, for his deference to the Pope was profound and incessant. But Charles had allowed his armies to sack Rome, to insult and imprison the pontiff. He had, it would seem, a malignant pleasure in thwarting and coercing Clement the Seventh. He needed the services of Lutheran soldiers in Germany, and he permitted his soldiers to attend the ministrations of their own preachers, even while they were under his orders, and before Maurice of Saxony compelled him to grant toleration. He was recognizing the Reformation in Germany, while he was burning thousands of the Reformers in the Netherlands.

The fact is he was fighting with political liberty. He saw that resistance to the divine right of the priest implied resistance to the divine right of the despot. He was shrewd enough to discern that if he winked at religious nonconformity, he would soon be face to face with political nonconformity. Precisely the same fact was recognized by Elizabeth and the Stuarts, by the house of Valois in France, and the house of Bourbon. The massacre of St. Bartholomew, the policy of Richelieu, and the dragonnades of Louis

the Fourteenth, had the same object with the policy of Charles and Philip. The Dutch Republic was the first to be tolerant ; and when the English people controlled the power of their kings at the Revolution, they followed up the deed with the Act of Toleration. But, even in our own day, the stimulant of religious bigotry—mild, indeed, by what it has been in the past —is constantly employed in order to defeat political justice. Even in his Spanish retreat, when Charles was deprived of the power of gratifying any of his vices, except gluttony, he still clamoured that more victims should be sacrificed to what he called his religious, but what were really his political, instincts.

In 1548, with the future of his inheritance within sight, Philip had sworn, without any reservation, to maintain all the privileges and liberties of the provinces and cities. He promised more than his father did, and probably by his father's advice, for the emperor knew that in that age vows were binding only on the weak. On July 25, 1554, he married Mary Tudor, of England, who was fortunately childless and not long-lived. England was freed of her in 1558, and of him a year before, for he deserted his wife when she was plainly unable to give England a Spanish king.

Philip the Second resided for four years in the Netherlands, and then left it never to revisit it. In the interval occurred his quarrel with Paul the Fourth and his war with France, the victory of St. Quentin, and the peace of Cateau Cambresis. These events have little to do with the history of the Netherlands, beyond the fact that, during their occurrence, it was

necessary to keep the Flemings and Hollanders in good humour. It is true that Philip early disregarded his father's advice. Charles had counselled him to govern the Netherlands by Netherlanders, for he knew well that the country had nobles enough who would betray its interests, and play into the king's hands. But Philip governed entirely by Spaniards, and so gave occasion to that bitter hatred of Spain which formed the bond of union between these disjointed commonwealths.

Philip, however, re-enacted the edict of 1550, by which the Inquisition was established in the Netherlands, though the towns were not ready to accept it, and the king was forced to temporise. He tried to get a permanent revenue, but had for the time to be content with a subsidy. But the peace which he made with France and the Pope, left him time to pursue his two designs on the Netherlands, the destruction of their liberties and the uprooting of heresy. Resolved to return to Spain, he made Margaret of Parma, natural daughter of Charles V., his regent. He appointed her council. He prepared to leave the Netherlands on August 7th. But as all seemed smooth, the Estates unanimously requested of the king that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from the Netherlands. For a time Philip was furious, for he saw that an army of Spaniards was necessary in order that he might give effect to his favourite project. But he had to temporise, especially as part of his policy was the creation of a number of additional bishoprics in the Netherlands. Then he left the country at Flushing. As he was on the point of sailing there occurred the memorable scene between him and the Prince of

Orange, whom he saw then for the last time. He reproached him with being the author of the opposition. William replied that the action of the Estates was unsolicited and spontaneous. On this Philip seized him violently by the wrist and, shaking it, said in Spanish, "Not the Estates, but you, you, you!" expressing himself by the most insulting pronoun he could use in Spanish. Philip reached Spain after a stormy voyage, and immediately regaled himself with an *auto da fé*. Soon after, for Philip had wooed Elizabeth of England in vain, he married Isabella of France, a marriage destined to cause a long war with that kingdom.

VIII

MARGARET OF PARMA.

THE regent who administered the Netherlands for eight years was the eldest natural child of Charles. She had been married, first to Alexander de Medici, when she was twelve years old. He was assassinated after a year. At twenty she was married to the nephew of another Pope, Paul the Third. Ottavio Farnese was only thirteen years old. By him she became the mother of the celebrated Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma. She was a woman of masculine and imperious temper, a mighty huntress, and celebrated in her time for two unfeminine characteristics—a well-defined moustache and the gout.

Margaret of Parma's mother was a Flemish woman. She could, however, be entirely trusted in carrying out her brother's designs in establishing the Inquisition, in retaining the foreign garrisons, and in crushing the liberties of the Netherlands. Her counsellors were Berlaymont, who, though a Fleming, was the persistent enemy of his country ; Viglius, who composed the famous persecuting edict of 1550 ; the Bishop of Arras,

afterwards the celebrated Cardinal Granvelle, the able and unscrupulous enemy of every Flemish liberty; Egmont, who had won the battles of St. Quentin and Gravelines, and thereby humiliated France; and William the Silent, Prince of Orange.

The family of Nassau had done the most important services to the house of Burgundy. It had supplied warriors and counsellors to Philip the Good, Charles the Bold, and Philip the Handsome. The influence of Henry of Nassau put the imperial crown on the head of Charles the Fifth. He died in war at the emperor's side, and his titles and estates passed to his nephew William. There was every reason why the descendants of Charles V. should make much of, and trust the house of Nassau. William, who was only eleven years old at the time when he succeeded to his cousin's inheritance, was the eldest of five sons, all of whom did noble work in the great war of independence. William was educated at Brussels under the eye of an old emperor, and from fifteen years of age was his constant attendant. At twenty-one he was appointed to command the army. He was now one of Margaret's council and Stadtholder, *i.e.*, the king's representative in Holland, Zeland, and Utrecht.

William negotiated the treaty of Cateau Cambresis, and, with the Duke of Alva, was one of the hostages appointed to guarantee the due execution of the treaty. It was in France, and while he was hunting with Henry II. in the Forest of Vincennes, that the French king incautiously communicated to William the plan which he and Philip had concocted for massacring all the Protestants in France and the Netherlands.

His motive was not religion, but a determination to extirpate all whose tenets, as he justly thought, would lead them to resist arbitrary power. To effect this the maintenance of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands was necessary. William received these communications without any appearance of surprise, and thereafter gained the name of William the Silent. But his mind was made up. He determined to do all that he could to get rid of the Spanish garrisons, to obstruct the establishment of the Inquisition, and to preserve the liberties of the Netherlands. It appears to me that Philip had divined his purposes at the epoch of that celebrated leave-taking. Had he given evidence of them, short work would have been made of him.

William was still a Catholic. Indeed at that time it may be doubted whether there was a single Flemish noble who had embraced the reformed faith. The prospect of such a conversion was not as yet attractive in the Netherlands, as it was in Northern Germany where the Reformation had given the princes independence and plunder. The dissidents from the old faith were artisans and priests whom the freedom of the new opinions had attracted. William was young, rich, and profuse. His wealth was great, his expenses greater. He kept open house at Brussels. But he did not, like one of his colleagues, speak of his poorer fellow countrymen as "that vile and mischievous animal called the people." He was an enemy to the edict of 1550, and to the Spanish policy.

There had been but four bishops in the Netherlands. Philip had induced the Pope to enlarge the number to eighteen, and to make three of them archbishops.

The motive of this change was to strengthen the machinery for extirpating heresy. In order to assist them the four thousand Spanish troops were to be kept indefinitely in the Netherlands, of course at the expense of the Estates. Here then was plenty of material for discontent, for agitation, and finally for revolt. The cities again resolved to appeal to their charters. The charter of Brabant expressly disabled the ruler from increasing the power of the clergy.

The unpopularity of these measures fell on Granvelle, as he was subsequently called. The old habit of loyalty was not yet worn out, and it was therefore expedient to transfer the odium from Philip to his minister. William led the opposition, and most of the nobles sided with him. At last Philip yielded, and withdrew the Spanish soldiers for a time in 1560. But the Inquisition kept to its work. On the other hand, the States were very reluctant to grant subsidies, and the king was at his wits' end for money. At this time (1561) William married the Princess Anna of Saxony, daughter of the celebrated Maurice. She was a Lutheran and the negotiations as to the exercise of her religion were protracted. Meanwhile the Inquisition with Titelmann at its head continued its office, and in 1564 Granvelle was superseded.

The Netherlanders were under the impression, and for a long time remained under it, that the severity of the government was not due to Philip, but to his ministers in the Netherlands. For this reason they hated Granvelle, with this view they sent deputations to Madrid—Egmont first, Montigny and Berghen afterwards. At last, in the beginning of 1566, some

of the Flemish nobles drew up the Compromise, by which they pledged themselves to resist the Inquisition. Orange took no part in it, but he did more. Remembering his conversation with Henry of France, he resolved to know Philip's mind. He therefore established such a system of espionage over Philip, that he got copies of all Philip's most secret despatches. It is the lot of despots to be ill served. Worse than that, it is their lot to be betrayed. Placing no trust in any man, they gain the genuine confidence of none. Meanwhile thousands of Flemish weavers emigrated to England, especially to the Eastern Counties, transferred their skill and industry thither, and soon became the successful rivals of the land of their birth.

The new league determined to present a "Request" to Margaret, and Orange so far acted with the leaders as to counsel them as to the language of the document. On April 5, 1566, the request was read to the Duchess and her council by Brederode. The purport of this document was that it was necessary to the peace of the country that the edicts and the Inquisition should be withdrawn, and that the management of affairs should be remitted to the States-General. The petitioners left, and the council debated it. Then it is that Berlaymont, always consistently hostile to his countrymen, exclaimed, "Is it possible that your Highness can be afraid of these beggars!" As the confederates passed his house afterwards, he is said to have repeated the insult. The confederates reiterated their requests on April 8th.

In the evening of that day Brederode prepared a great banquet for three hundred guests at his mansion.

The Flemings did much in the way of eating and drinking, and when they were warm with wine, the guests debated what name they should give their association. The host rose and told them, to their indignation, what was the name which the councillor had given them. He then suggested that they should adopt the name, instantly seized a beggar's wallet and bowl, filled the latter with wine, put the former on, and passed both to his next neighbour. The name was adopted with shouts of applause, and thenceforward the Netherland patriots went by the name.

Orange, Egmont, and Horn entered the apartment when the revelry was at its height. They were constrained to drink the new toast and instantly left. Their momentary presence at this orgie caused soon after the deaths of the last two, a fate which Orange would have shared had he come into his enemies' hands. In the morning a new costume, imitating in quality and appearance the beggars' clothing and appendages, was adopted by them. The common folk of the Netherlands now believed that they had leaders, and crowded to listen to the preachers.

Shortly after these events, in August, occurred the image breaking in the Netherlands churches. But no injury was done to anything else, not to any person. The only objects on which the mobs wreaked their wrath were the symbols of the ancient religion. The confederate nobles took no part in the outrage. For a time the violence seemed to be an advantage. On August 25th, the Duchess signed the Accord, under which the Inquisition was abolished, and a general toleration accorded. The nobles did their best to

quiet the disturbances. But while Philip temporised, he had made up his mind. He collected an army in Spain, put it under the command of Alva, gave his commander instructions, and the war began.

IX.

ALVA.

PHILIP had resolved to establish the Inquisition by the sword. He collected his army in Italy, and put Alva at the head of it. This man had been all his life engaged in war, was now sixty years old, and had the reputation, justly earned, of being the most accomplished and capable warrior in Europe. He had gained victories in Spain, in Africa, in Germany, in Italy, in France. He was, perhaps, the most bloodthirsty man who ever existed in what is called the civilized world, and he was sent to the Netherlands to satiate himself. The army was worthy of the general. He commanded the finest and the most merciless troops in Europe.

Some of these troops, about 10,000 in number, embarked at Carthagena on May 16, 1567. The principal part of the force was collected at Genoa, and marched across Mont Cenis, and through Savoy, Burgundy, and Lorraine. Had the confederates in the Netherlands determined at this time to resist Philip, and had Egmont taken the command, it is probable that

COUNT ALVA.

Alva's troops might have been destroyed in detail, so difficult was the march. By the middle of August they were all in the Netherlands. Alva fixed his headquarters at Brussels, on August 23rd, but distributed his troops through the other cities. It was the intention of Philip and Alva to destroy every Netherlander who had resisted or even criticized the Spanish policy. Of course, Orange, Egmont, Horn, and Hoogstraten, were to be forthwith arrested and dealt with. There was to be a political in addition to a religious inquisition. In the interval these eminent men were to be entrapped into a false security. The plot succeeded with Egmont and Horn; it failed with Orange and Hoogstraten.

On September 9th Horn and Egmont were arrested, and on September 23rd transferred to the castle of Ghent, with other leading persons. Alva had done part of his commission with secrecy and dispatch. But the escape of Orange was thought by those who knew the Netherlands to make the capture of the others politically valueless. However, on the very day on which Horn and Egmont was arrested, Alva established a council which he called that of Troubles, but the Netherlanders the Blood Council. It was an invention of Alva's own. It soon set to work and slew its thousands before Margaret of Parma retired, which she did on December 9th. She was probably softened by this time, for her best friends and advisers had been imprisoned by her successor, and were already doomed. Alva set to work to build the citadel of Antwerp. In October, 1568, he took up his quarters in the new fortress.

Orange was prosecuted, and his eldest son was kidnapped and sent to Spain. But William was himself out of reach. Meanwhile, a sentence of the Inquisition condemned all the inhabitants of the Netherlands, with a few exceptions, to death as heretics, and Philip confirmed the sentence. How powerful must the theory of the divine right of kings and the divine right of priests have been, that this decree was not met by an instant revolt. But all that came of it, as yet, was that bands of marauders, under the name of Wild Beggars, took to robbing all and sundry, but especially to mutilating monks and priests.

Meanwhile, Orange had collected troops and taken to the field. He made his attack on three points and failed in two. But at the battle of Heiligerlee, in Friesland, the patriots were victorious, and the army of the Spaniards all but annihilated. But the victory was the death warrant of Egmont and Horn. They are executed on June 5, 1568.

One of the brothers of Orange had perished in the battle of Heiligerlee, Louis of Nassau, another, was still in the field. But Alva was on his path, routed his army, laid waste the country, slaughtered the inhabitants, and brought back his soldiers with little loss. While Alva was defeating Louis, Philip was murdering his eldest son, Don Carlos. Had this young man gone, as he wished, to the Netherlands, in place of Alva, the tyranny of Caligula would have been exhibited in place of that of Nero.

As Alva had beaten Louis of Nassau, so he now baffled William, who had now openly embraced the reformed faith, but carried into his new creed an

utter hatred of religious bigotry. He would persecute neither Papist or Anabaptist. With perhaps equal sincerity, he declared that he did not make war on Philip, but on Alva. He got but little aid from the nobles, who promised him much ; he got as little help from the peasants from whom he could expect nothing. He collected a formidable army, but he could not force Alva to fight, and the army wasted away. Alva returned to Antwerp, and set up a colossal statue of himself on the citadel.

Alva was now triumphant, and, to all appearance, the fortunes of Orange and the Netherlands were desperate. The Flemish nobles were without spirit or character, as was to be often proved, and the people were not yet organized. Just at this crisis, Elizabeth of England put Alva into a serious difficulty. She impounded certain treasure ships which were on the road for the payment of the Spanish troops. This was the beginning of those military bankruptcies which ultimately aided the patriots so much. The murders of Alva and the depopulation of the Netherlands were drying up all sources of revenue, and Alva began seriously to think of an amnesty. In his efforts to obtain money, Alva had even ventured on plundering his own Church, and he did it with a high hand.

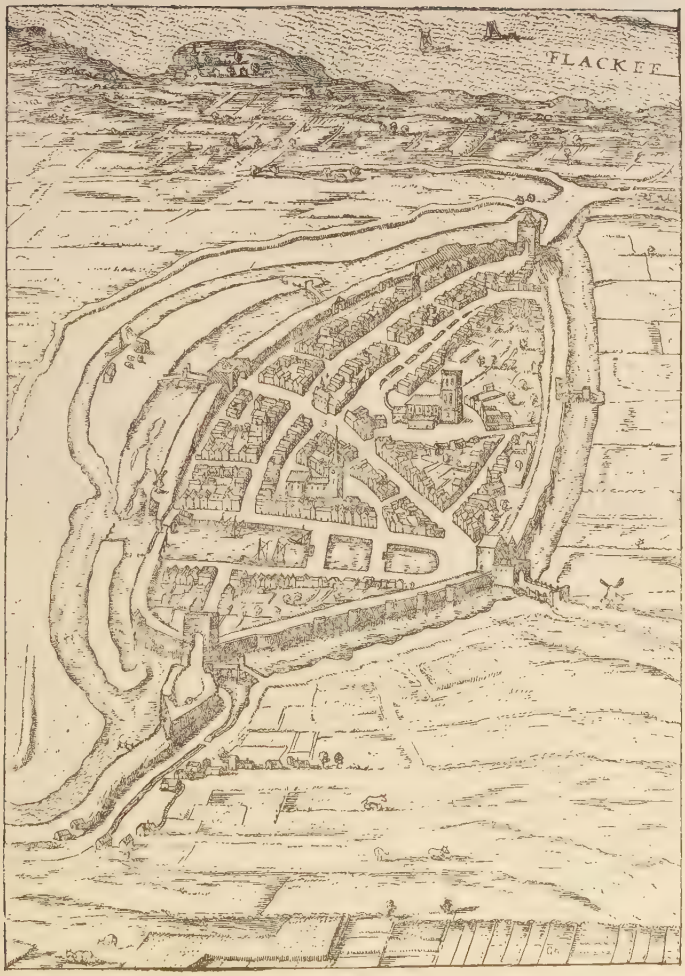
For two or three years Orange was an exile and a wanderer, while Alva was striving to reconcile the Flemings and Hollanders to taxes which would have absolutely ruined them. From time to time he was engaged in plots for the murder of Elizabeth, assassination by hired bravos being now considered legitimate

warfare by Philip. The plots were found out, the assassins punished, and the English people—Catholic, Anglican, and Puritan alike—were becoming united against Spain, and in defence of Elizabeth. Even Philip's victories were barren, for though the battle of Lepanto had checked the progress of the Turks, it had not furthered the ascendency of Spain.

Alva's unpopularity was daily increasing, the provinces were nearly ruined, or saw they could arrest ruin only by energetic resistance, the governor's successor was appointed, and Orange was again steadily but secretly making way, when the first turn of the tide came in favour of the patriots. The Beggars of the Sea had captured the city of Brill.

The Hollanders had long been familiar with the sea. They had been driven from their homes; their native land was being given up to military execution; they could not for years stand against Spanish discipline in the field, but they rapidly became invincible on the water. The narrow seas were now swarming with rovers, furnished with letters of marque by Orange, and, it is to be feared, that they levied their contributions impartially from Spaniard and neutral. Their admiral was William de la Marck, a descendant of wild freebooters, and himself as ferocious as any of his ancestors. He was a kinsman of Egmont, and was sworn to avenge himself on Alva.

Twenty-four vessels, manned by the Beggars of the Sea, were cruising in the spring of 1572, on the southern coast of England. Elizabeth, who had made up her quarrel with Alva, forbade her subjects from provisioning the Beggars. Half-starved already,



BRILL.

the rovers determined to essay some place in Holland, and appeared before Brill. They determined to obtain its surrender, and sent a friendly fisherman of the town as their envoy. The Beggars were some four hundred in all, but the fishermen, when asked about their numbers, answered in a careless manner, about five thousand. There was no thought of resistance, and the patriots soon got possession, and held it in the name of Orange. Alva sent troops to recapture the town, but they were repulsed ; for the Sea Beggars were in their element. A short time afterwards, Flushing was rescued from Alva by the patriots, and the number of their partisans rapidly increasing, this town was garrisoned. Here they caught Pacheco, Alva's engineer, who had built the citadel of Antwerp, and had been sent to finish the defences of Flushing. They hanged him on the spot.

Almost at an instant, nearly all the cities of Holland and Zeland threw off the Spanish yoke, and accepted the government of Orange, though in the name of the king. But for a long time the insurgents claimed nothing more than the charters and liberties to which Philip had voluntarily sworn. Toleration was from the first the law of William's government. Meanwhile Louis of Nassau had captured the city of Mons, in South-west Flanders. At Walcheren nearly the whole Lisbon fleet was captured by the Beggars, the pay of the Spanish soldiery, and much of their ammunition.

On July 18, 1572, the Estates of Holland were convened at Dort, under the authority of Orange as Stadtholder. The convention was primarily for the

ENVIRONS OF DORDRECHT.

purpose of raising funds for the prosecution of the war. Stirred to enthusiasm by the eloquence of Saint Aldegonde, the Hollanders unanimously resolved to dedicate themselves and their fortunes to the cause which was identified with Orange. The prince was himself seeking to effect a junction with the Huguenot troops, who were marching to the relief of Mons, but who were defeated before he could achieve his object. He continued his march, levying troops, collecting funds, and relying on the French, when on August 24th occurred the frightful massacre of St. Bartholomew. His plans were frustrated, his army was disbanded, and he was forced to retire into Holland. On September 19th, Mons was surrendered, and the Flemish towns returned to their allegiance. Henceforth, the principal interest of the struggle centres in Holland.

Even here, however, the affairs of the patriots were unprosperous. Tergoes was relieved, and Zutphen sacked by the Spaniards. William was deserted by his brother-in-law, De Berg, who betrayed what was entrusted to him. Harlem, after a desperate defence, was captured in the summer of 1573. But the siege of Alkmaar, after an heroic defence of seven weeks, was raised. Then there was a breathing time for the Hollanders. The French king intrigued for the marriage of his brother with Elizabeth, and the Spanish king intrigued with the electors of the German Empire for the succession to Maximilian. Besides the Dutch had defeated the Spanish commander by sea, at Enkhuizen, on October 11th. On December 18th, Alva left the Netherlands. His Blood Council had put to death 18,600 persons.

X.

REQUESENS, THE GRAND COMMANDER.

It was understood that the new governor represented a policy of concession of amnesty, even of peace. But he was hampered by two conditions. He was to secure the king's supremacy, and the total prohibition of any but the Roman Catholic religion. It was obvious that unless an unconditional surrender was made, there was no hope for peace, and, in fact, the war continued for thirty-six years longer. Yet every one desired peace, Catholic and Protestant, Spaniard, Fleming, and Hollander, the advisers and tools of Alva, and the friends and adherents of Orange. Even Philip would have been glad to stop the perpetual drain on his resources, and avert the bankruptcy which was imminent.

The army, now numbering sixty-two thousand, was nearly a twelve months' pay in arrears. The country had been impoverished and the States refused to grant a dollar. But, on the other side, though the Dutch were out-numbered and out-generalled, they maintained their fleets and their forces, though they were

sometimes short in granting supplies. Requesens, therefore imagined that the whole of the Netherlands would accept peace on any terms; and if only the nobles had to be consulted, he was probably in the right.

The Hollanders were now unquestionably superiors on the sea, as was to be conclusively proved. The patriots were besieging Middelburg, in the island of Walcheren, in which a Spanish general of great ability and courage was commander. The new governor found it necessary to relieve the garrison, which was nearly starved out. It could only be effected after a victorious sea fight. The battle was joined on January 29th, and the patriots were entirely victorious. Middelburg was soon surrendered.

The siege of Leyden was the great event of the year. It was closely invested, and Orange bade his brother Louis relieve it. On March 14th he fought a battle with the besieging force; his army was nearly annihilated, and he and his brother Henry slain. Their bodies, however, were never discovered. It seemed now that Leyden would be lost, not from the victorious army, which mutinied immediately after their victory, and marching on Antwerp, seized the city. Their pay was three years in arrear. But the danger was not passed, for the siege was reformed. Meanwhile the Dutch admiral had succeeded in destroying another Spanish fleet.

The second siege of Leyden began on May 26th. It lasted till October 3rd. The limits of this work disable the author from describing in detail this memorable siege, and the relief of the city by the

OLD DUTCH STREET AND TOWN-HALL.

Beggars of the Sea. To meet their foe, and to baffle him, the Hollanders cut the dykes between Leyden and the sea, and turned the leaguer of the Spaniards into a sea fight, in which the patriots were thoroughly in their element. At last the Spaniards retreated in panic, and the siege was raised.

In remembrance of this great deliverance, the States of Holland resolved to found a university in the town of Leyden. They endowed it with the possessions of the abbey of Egmont, and provided it with teachers, selected from the ablest scholars in the Netherlands. For two centuries the University of Leyden was the most famous in Europe. But Orange still kept up the form of loyalty, and the charter of the university declares that it was founded by Philip, Count of Holland.

The two provinces, Holland and Zeland, though Harlem and Amsterdam were still in the power of the enemy, raised nearly as high a revenue monthly for the prosecution of the war, as Alva had been able to extract yearly from the rest of the Netherlands. The fact is, their trade grew with their efforts. They were still in theory subjects of Spain, and they traded with the Spanish possessions. They were even charged with manufacturing and selling the powder with which the Spaniards bombarded their cities. Even to the last they made war on the Spanish Government, and had commercial transactions with Spanish subjects; for as Philip did not recognize their independence, they seem, except at their pleasure, to be at war with him only in their own country.

In the autumn of 1574, the Constitution of Holland

was organized. William was made commander-in-chief; a monthly grant for the expenses of the army was conceded to him, and practically the whole conduct of affairs was conferred on him. Then came the farce of negotiating a peace. The terms of Philip were inadmissible. He refused toleration to the reformed religion, and the conferences were abruptly closed.

In 1575, the states of Holland and Zeland were united. It was not done without some difficulty, for the municipal principle had ruinously kept cities apart, and made military action capricious and uncertain. It was this temper of isolation, constantly breaking out and thwarting the interests of the whole republic, which prolonged the war, narrowed the independence, and ultimately was a potent factor in bringing about the decline of the Dutch Republic.

In the same year, however, the States suffered another reverse. The island of Schouwen was invaded by an army which marched through the sea to the mainland by one of those channels which separate the islands of the Dutch coast, and its capital, Zierikzee, was besieged. The situation induced the Hollanders, though with no little hesitation, to take an important step.

This was no less than to formally discard the sovereignty of Philip, and to declare their independence as far as he was concerned. But William and the States were far from believing that they could still stand alone. The renunciation of Philip was necessary only because they wished or felt it necessary that they should adopt some other prince as their lord, provided, of course, that their new ruler would

protect their religion and their liberties. Negotiation with divers powers were continued during nearly the whole of the War of Independence.

There were three Powers to whom they might apply —the Emperor of Germany, the Queen of England, and the King of France. The first of these seemed most constitutional. It had undoubtedly been the case that in early times Holland had formed part of the German Empire, and the fact had not been forgotten in the negotiations between Philip and the emperor. Had the proposition of William been accepted, the independence of Holland would practically have been secured, for the States would have occupied the position which the German sovereigns did under what was no more than the nominal supremacy of the emperor. No doubt the religion of the Dutch, Calvinism, was an obstacle, for Protestant Germany was Lutheran, and fifty years later the irreconcilable enmity of the Calvinists and Lutherans was no small cause of the disasters which Germany suffered in the Thirty Years' War.

Another difficulty was in the family relations of the emperor and Philip. The princes of Austria, Spain, and Portugal were closely connected by family ties, and marriages often taking place between certain members of these families, by the Pope's dispensation, which would have been impossible in any other persons. In Spain and Portugal the marriage of uncle and niece was far from uncommon, and even more closely related persons were, as political exigencies seemed to dictate, contemplated for such unions. Besides the real assistance the Emperor of

Germany could give was little. Any effectual help must come from the Protestant princes.

Elizabeth of England was in a very peculiar position. Her foreign enemies held her to be illegitimate. Her rival, Mary Stewart, was indeed in prison, and was detested in Scotland. But she had her party, and carried on her intrigues. Again, Elizabeth was very poor. The manufactures and trade of England were not developed, and she did not yet suspect that her sailors would be a match for Spain. Nor did she like the idea of patronizing revolted subjects. It was a dangerous precedent, and might be used against her. She preferred, therefore, to intrigue, to lend a favourable ear to the States, perhaps to assist them secretly—at any rate, to assist them cautiously. Even when she broke with Philip and went to war with him, she greatly hesitated. Though she knew that the Netherlands were at this time the bulwark of England and the fortress of Protestantism, she was timid and slow. She would and she would not. In the end she helped Holland more than any other state did.

The author of the massacre of St. Bartholomew had now passed away, and the last prince of the house of Valois was on the throne. He was even a more contemptible person than his predecessor, and the Queen Dowager was the real ruler. But who could trust this treacherous Court, whose perfidy was even greater than that of Spain, and whose crimes had been more colossal? Still Orange inclined to France as, indeed, his son Maurice, with better apparent reason, did. At any rate, it was well to play off the jealousy of England against the jealousy of France.

It was at this time, as we are told, that Orange seriously meditated the scheme of transferring the Hollanders from the land of their birth to a new settlement, either in the Old or New World. It might be curious to speculate on what the course of history might have been if the whole population had migrated to the United States or the Tropics, to the island of Java or to the island of Manhattan, and that either or both these places had been the home of this race instead of being its colonies. But it was destined that Europe should be the theatre of the great deliverance.

It is not certain that Orange was seriously debating the alternative of emigration. It has been confidently alleged that he was ; it has been as confidently disputed. But on March 5th the Grand Commander died, after a few days' illness. There was a lull for a time. Philip, as years passed on, became more procrastinating than ever, though he was none the less absolute and determined on the purposes which he had formed.

XI.

DON JOHN OF AUSTRIA.

WHILE Philip was engaged in selecting his viceroy, trouble befel his government in the Netherlands. Immediately after the fall of Zierikzee the Spanish troops mutinied. They had been unpaid for years, and no money was forthcoming from Spain. The Netherlands had been nearly drained, and it is probable that neither Philip nor his lieutenants desired to utterly impoverish the obedient provinces. The practice of these mutineers was to depose their own officers, or, at least, to disobey them, and to elect a temporary chief, to whom they gave, under the name of Eletto, full powers as long as they pleased to continue them. It was a dangerous pre-eminence, for a deposed or distrusted Eletto was pretty sure to forfeit his life with his office.

The mutineers demanded a city, and succeeded in capturing Alost. Thence they threatened Brussels. They could make no impression on it ; so, having exhausted Alost, they resolved on attacking Antwerp. The mutineers had been outlawed by the Government,

but were in communication with the governor of the citadel of Antwerp. The Spaniards burst into the city, overpowered its defences, and the Spanish fury took place on November 4th. It surpassed in horror and atrocity anything which happened during the war. The soldiers paid themselves handsomely, for it is said that they divided among themselves five millions of crowns.

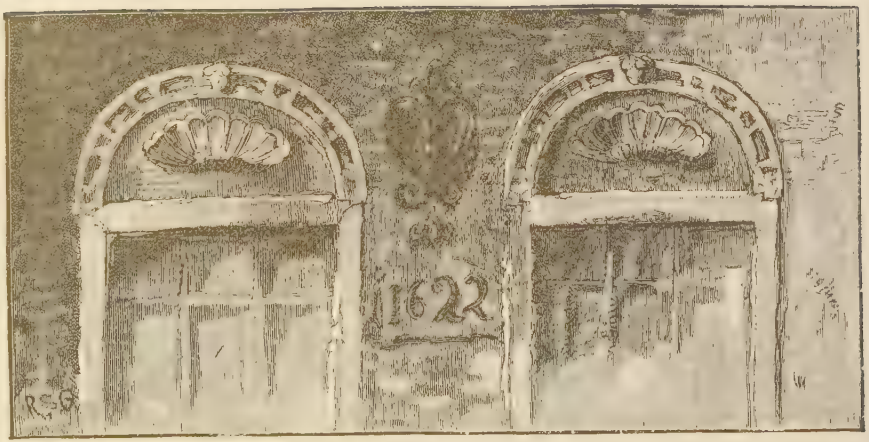
The sack of Antwerp hastened the pacification of Ghent, which William had been negotiating. It provided, though unfortunately it was short lived, for the union of all the provinces of the Netherlands, for complete amity among them, and for the restoration of all the old liberties. It was signed on November 8, 1576, by the deputies of Holland and Zeland, on the one hand, and by those of thirteen other states or cities, on the other. The Spanish soldiery was to be expelled, and the Inquisition was to be abolished. At the same time, Zierikzee and the island of Schouwen were abandoned and recovered. Four days before the pacification of Ghent was signed, a cavalier, attended by a Moorish slave, rode into Luxemb urg. The slave was in reality Don John of Austria, the new governor, who entered on his office in this strange disguise.

Don John of Austria was an illegitimate son of Charles V. His mother is said to have been a washerwoman of Ratisbon, who lived, during Alva's administration and to his exceeding discomfort, at Ghent. She lived there till her son arrived as governor, when she was persuaded or forced to retire into Spain. When an infant John was put under the care

of a Spanish grandee and carefully educated. When he was fourteen years of age, the secret of his birth was made known to him by Philip. He was educated in the company of his two nephews, Don Carlos, the heir-apparent of Spain, and Alexander of Parma. It appears that Philip designed him for the Church, but Don John was nothing but a soldier, and, after a struggle, he had his way.

The battle of Lepanto, in which John defeated the Turks, was fought in October, 1571, and the fame of the commander was on every one's tongue. But the victory was barren. The allies might have taken Constantinople, but they began to quarrel with each other. John strove to create for himself a kingdom in Tunis. But Philip interfered. Then Don John, with the goodwill of the Pope, determined to invade England, to dethrone Elizabeth, to liberate and marry the imprisoned Mary Stewart, and make himself king of England and Scotland. As he was gaining the Pope's assent, news came to him that he had been appointed Governor-General of the Netherlands. It seemed as though his dream was almost accomplished. There were ten thousand Spanish troops there, the bravest veterans in the world. He would soon, he imagined, quiet the discontents of the Flemings, and then win his kingdom. It was true that the news from the provinces was daily more unsatisfactory, as he was waiting for the last instructions of the dilatory Philip. Freed at last, he hurried, as I have said, in disguise through France.

Against this knight-errant, William was to exert all his energies and all his abilities. He implored the



WINDOW OF AN OLD HOUSE AT GRONINGEN.

States not to treat with John, but to resist him, unless he immediately sent away the Spanish and other foreign troops. For a time the States-General were firm, for they insisted on the Ghent Pacification. Don John affected to listen to them, and agreed to send away his troops, only stipulating that they should go by sea. He intended to make a descent on England. The States began to suspect his determination in the manner of their removal. The Ghent treaty was followed by the Brussels Union, the main point of which was the expulsion of the Spaniards. Meanwhile Friesland and Groningen had been gained by the Dutch. At last Don John, after much fencing, agreed to accept virtually the Pacification of Ghent. He held firmly however to his demand that the troops should leave the Netherlands by sea. In a short time this was conceded also by Don John, and on February 17, 1577, the treaty between Philip and the Netherlands was signed at Brussels. By this treaty Don John and subsequently Philip agreed that all foreign troops should be withdrawn, never to return except in case of foreign war, that all prisoners should be released, except the eldest son of Orange, who had been kidnapped nearly twenty years before, though he should be set free as soon as his father came into the treaty. It promised to maintain all the privileges, charters, and free institutions of the Netherlands and confirmed the peace of Ghent.

It now seemed that the Netherlands had gained all they asked for, and that everything for which they had contended had been conceded. The Blood Council of Alva had almost extirpated the Reformers, and an

overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the Low Countries with the exception of the Hollanders and Zelanders, belonged to the old Church, provided the Inquisition was done away with, and a religious peace was accorded.

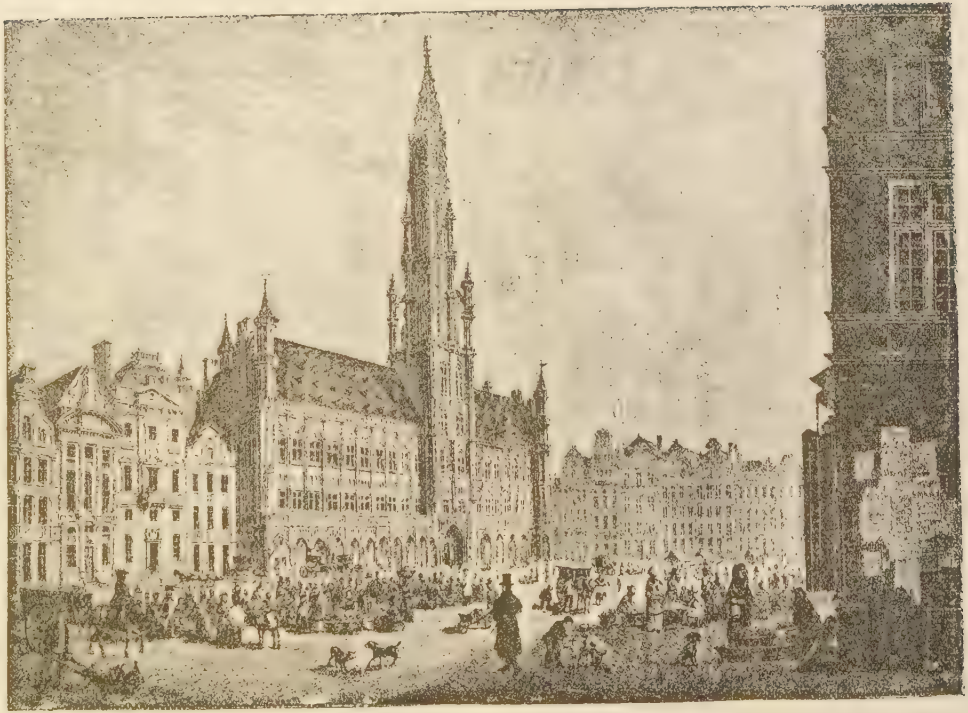
But Don John had to reckon with the Prince of Orange. In him William had no confidence. He could not forget the past. He believed that the signatures and concessions of the governor and Philip were only expedients to gain time, and that they would be revoked or set aside as soon as it was convenient or possible to do so. Apart from his knowledge of the men with whom he had to deal, he had intercepted letters from the leading Spaniards in Don John's employment, in which, when the treaty was in course of signature, designs were disclosed of keeping possession of all the strong places in the country, with the object of reducing the patriots in detail. He saw that the citadels which had been built were still to be in the hands of the King of Spain, and he well knew what this meant.

Above all, William distrusted the Flemish nobles. He knew them to be greedy, fickle, treacherous, ready to betray their country for personal advantage, and to ally themselves blindly with their natural enemies. The Perpetual Edict, the name given to the new treaty, was not, he saw, the same as the Pacification of Ghent, though it purported to recognize that accord. The very fact that the Flemish nobles trusted the concessions of Philip, made him the more distrust it and them. And as events proved, Orange was in the right.

Hence he refused to recognize the treaty in his own

states of Holland and Zeland. As soon as it was published and sent to him, William after conference with these states, published a severe criticism on its provisions. He knew perfectly well that Philip and his deputy would do all in their power to win him over, even to a seeming consent. They on their part, as their discovered correspondence shows, knew that the success or failure of their machinations depended on their success in hoodwinking Orange. "The name of your Majesty," says Don John, "is as much abhorred and despised in the Netherlands, as that of the Prince of Orange is loved and feared." But the governor did not and could not conceive that there was one thing which William valued above all offers and all bribes, and that was the security and freedom of the country whose affairs he was administering.

In all seeming however Don John was prepared to carry out his engagements. He got together with difficulty the funds for paying the arrears due to the troops, and sent them off by the end of April. He caressed the people and he bribed the nobles. He handed over the citadels to Flemish governors, and entered Brussels on May 1st. Everything pointed to success and mutual good will. But we have Don John's letters, in which he speaks most unreservedly and most unflatteringly of his new friends, and of his designs on the liberties of the Netherlands. And all the while that Philip was soothing and flattering his brother, he had determined on ruining him, and on murdering the man whom that brother loved and trusted. About this time, too, we find that Philip and his deputy were casting about for the means by which



HOTEL DE VILLE, BRUSSELS.

they might assassinate the Prince of Orange, "who had bewitched the whole people!" Meanwhile they continued to negotiate with him.

An attempt of Don John to get possession of the citadel of Antwerp for himself failed, and the patriots gained it. The merchants of Antwerp agreed to find the pay still owing to the soldiers, on condition of their quitting the city. But while they were discussing the terms, a fleet of Zeland vessels came sailing up the Scheldt. Immediately a cry was raised, "The Beggars are coming," and the soldiers fled in dismay. Then the Antwerpers demolished the citadel, and turned the statue of Alva again into cannon.

After these events, William of Orange put an end to negotiations with Don John. Prince William was in the ascendant. But the Catholic nobles conspired against him, and induced the Archduke Matthias, brother of the German Emperor Rodolph, to accept the place of governor of the Netherlands in lieu of Don John. He came, but Orange was made the Ruwaard of Brabant, with full military power. It was the highest office which could be bestowed on him. The "Union of Brussels" followed and was a confederation of all the Netherlands. But the battle of Gemblours was fought in February, 1578, and the patriots were defeated. Many small towns were captured, and it seemed that in course of time the governor would recover at least a part of his lost authority. But in the month of September, Don John was seized with a burning fever, and died on October 1st. His heart was buried at Namur, but his body was carried to Spain.

XII.

ALEXANDER OF PARMA.

THE new governor of the Netherlands, son of Ottavio Farnese, Prince of Parma, and of Margaret of Parma, sister of Philip of Spain, was a very different person from any of the regents who had hitherto controlled the Netherlands. He was, or soon proved himself to be, the greatest general of the age, and he was equally, according to the statesmanship of the age, the most accomplished and versatile statesman. He had no designs beyond those of Philip, and during his long career in the Netherlands, from October, 1578, to December, 1592, he served the King of Spain as faithfully and with as few scruples as Philip could have desired. The king survived the prince for nearly six years. But he survived nearly all those who took part in the prolonged struggle in the Netherlands. Bad as his constitution was, his methodical life and his entire freedom from any passion whatever but selfishness allowed him to grow old.

Parma was religious, but he had no morality whatever. He was not bigoted like Alva, for he was

politic, and knew that unwise severity might baffle a commander and ruin a campaign. But he had no scruple in deceiving, lying, assassinating, and even less scruple in saying or swearing that he had done none of these things. Men whose creed is that they have an indefeasible right to the lives and fortunes, and even to the consciences of their subjects, as they call them, are seldom scrupulous. Now such men, if they possess military genius in time of war, and diplomatic skill in times of peace, are and always will be (for the type exists, though the manner is changed) the worst enemies of the human race. To complete the picture of Parma's character, it should be added that he was entirely disinterested. He impoverished himself, wore himself out, was lavish in bribing others, but was temperate, plain in his habits, unsparing of his own life, and entirely disinterested. He had an excellent judgment of men, and indeed he had experience of the two extremes, of the exceeding baseness of the Flemish nobles, and of the lofty and pure patriotism of the Dutch patriots. Nothing indeed was more unfortunate for the Dutch, than the belief which they entertained, that the Flemings who had been dragooned into uniformity, could be possibly stirred to patriotism. Alva had done his work thoroughly. It is possible to extirpate a reformation. But the success of the process is the moral ruin of those who are the subjects of the experiment.

Fortunately, for Parma, there was a suitor for the Netherland sovereignty, in the person of the very worst prince of the very worst royal family that ever existed in Europe, *i.e.*, the Duke of Anjou, of the

house of Valois. This person was favoured by Orange, probably because he had detected Philip's designs on France, and thought that national jealousy would induce the French Government, which was Catherine of Medici, to favour the Low Countries. Besides, Parma had a faction in every Flemish town, who were known as the Malcontents, who were the party of the greedy and unscrupulous nobles. And, besides Anjou, there was the party of another pretender, John Casimir, of Poland. He, however, soon left them. Parma quickly found in such dissensions plenty of men whom he could usefully bribe. He made his first purchases in the Walloon district, and secured them. The provinces here were Artois, Hainault, Lille, Douay, and Orchies. They were soon permanently reunited to Spain.

On January 29, 1579, the Union of Utrecht, which was virtually the Constitution of the Dutch Republic, was agreed to. It was greater in extent on the Flemish side than the Dutch Republic finally remained, less on that of Friesland. Orange still had hopes of including most of the Netherland seaboard, and he still kept up the form of allegiance to Philip. The principal event of the year was the siege and capture of Maestricht. The Hollanders could not make up their mind to the sacrifice which was necessary in order to save it. Mechlin also was betrayed by its commander, De Bours, who reconciled himself to Romanism, and received the pay for his treason from Parma at the same time. In March, 1580, a similar act of treason was committed by Count Renneberg, the governor of Friesland, who

betrayed its chief city, Groningen. He had assured the burgomaster of the city the night before, that such guilt was far from his thoughts, and murdered the burgomaster next day. The honest men of this age were the burghers. With few exceptions, the nobles were corrupt, and when they were not corrupt, often disgraced the cause they served by violence and cruelty, by drunkenness and recklessness.

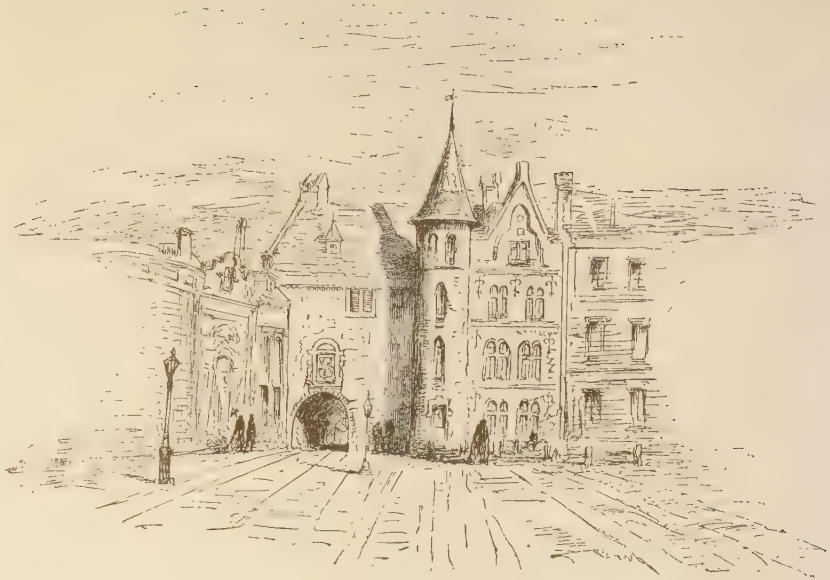
In this year, Philip became also King of Portugal. He not only now had the whole of the Spanish peninsula under his sway, but he succeeded to that estate in the East Indies which Alexander the Sixth, of pious memory, had conferred on the Portuguese king nearly a century before. The event was important, because the quarrel of the Low Countries with Spain led to the creation of the Dutch East India trade, and to the foundation of the Dutch Empire in the Moluccas. We shall see in the course of this narrative how the Dutch had their opportunities, and insisted on the rights which they had acquired.

In the same year, June, 1580, was published the ban of Philip. This instrument, drawn up by Cardinal Granvelle, declared Orange to be traitor and miscreant, made him an outlaw, put a heavy price on his head (25,000 gold crowns), offered the assassin the pardon of any crime, however heinous, and nobility, whatever be his rank. Philip had tried to cajole him. He had tried, by enormous offers, to bribe him. He was now determined, if possible, to murder him ; and at last, after four years' anxious strivings, he succeeded. William answered the ban by a vigorous appeal to

the civilized world. He had, indeed, but a limited, perhaps a powerless audience, for the doctrine of political assassination had been taught for some time by the Jesuits. They had conspired against Elizabeth, but the Queen was well informed. Walsingham had a quick scent for these vermin, baffled them while he lived, and had his successors or disciples in the craft. But William, while he sent his "Apology" to all the potentates in Europe, was certain of the sympathy and affection of the Dutch States, then assembled at Delft.

Renneberg, the traitor, laid siege to Steenwyk, the principal fortress of Drenthe, at the beginning of 1581. There were Malcontents in the place, and foremost among them was a butcher, who wanted to know what the population was to eat when the meat was gone. "We will eat you, villain," the commander answered, "first of all, so you may be sure you will not die of starvation." In February, John Norris, the English general, one of Elizabeth's chickens of Mars, relieved the town. Renneberg raised the siege, was defeated in July by the same Norris, and died, full of remorse, a few days afterwards.

But the most important event in 1581 was the declaration of Dutch Independence, formally issued at the Hague on the 26th of July. By this instrument, Orange, though most unwillingly, felt himself obliged to accept the sovereignty over Holland and Zeland, and whatever else of the seven provinces was in the hands of the patriots. The Netherlands were now divided into three portions. The Walloon Provinces in the south were reconciled to Philip and Parma.



THE PRISON, THE HAGUE.

The middle provinces were under the almost nominal sovereignty of Anjou, the northern were under William. The Prince of Orange really desired that the sovereignty of Holland should also be conferred on Anjou, but the Estates would not have him, and would have none but William, Father William as they affectionately called him.

Philip's name was now discarded from public documents, his authority was formally, as it long had been effectively, disowned; his seal was broken, and William was thereafter to conduct the government in his own name. The instrument was styled an "Act of Abjuration." At this time, it seems surprising that so much delay was made in performing an act, which had virtually been in operation for almost a generation. But just as the value of history consists in extracting wisdom for the future from the experience of the past, because the record of social life to have value must be continuous, and because even the remote past has its bearing on the present, so it is quite necessary, if we are to have any reality in our interpretation of the past, to project ourselves into it, and strive with all our powers, original or borrowed, to realize what the past was. An English historian, when he was asked when modern history began, instantly answered with, "The call of Abraham," and, indeed, the historical student cannot neglect without serious injury to his study of what is after all the scanty fragments of human action which survive, anything whose influence is still enduring.

The fact is, the action of the Dutch Republic was the first appeal which the world has read on the duties

of rulers to their people. Men have revolted a thousand times against tyranny and misgovernment, sometimes successfully, more frequently to be crushed into more hopeless servitude. The Dutch were the first to justify their action by an appeal to the first principles of justice. They were the first to assert that human institutions, and human allegiance to governments are to be interpreted and maintained by their manifest utility. They were the first to assert and prove that men and women are not the private estate of princes, to be disposed of in their industry, their property, their consciences, by the discretion of those who were fortunate enough to be able to live by the labours of others. They were the first to affirm that there is, and must be, a contract between the ruler and the people, even though that contract has not been reduced to writing, or debated on, or fought for ; and strangely enough, the idea which lay under this doctrine was derived from that which had now become the principal instrument of oppression and wrong doing. The feudal system from which the Dutch broke away, was the origin of the tenet that the duties of the ruler and the subject are reciprocal.

But this doctrine had been buried and forgotten. In modern times constitutional antiquaries have exhumed it and wrangled over it. The other doctrine, sedulously taught by venal lawyers and ambitious priests, that every right which man has is held at the discretion of the prince, and that every opinion he entertains is to be guided, controlled, or abandoned at the bidding of the priest, had smothered the more ancient theory of reciprocal obligation. The two

rulers, king and priest, had entered into a compact. The latter was to teach the doctrine of passive obedience, the former was to support the creed which the latter thought proper to promulgate, with the secular arm. During the whole of the seventeenth century, the English clergy were teaching the doctrine of passive obedience from the ten thousand pulpits. A century after the declaration of Dutch Independence, Hobbes, who believed nothing, laid down the doctrine that a subject ought to take that creed which the discretion of the king supplied him with.

It is impossible to over-estimate the timeliness, the significance, the value of the Act of Abjuration. The sturdy Hollanders, at a time when public liberty seemed entirely lost, and despotism had become a religious creed, began the political reformation. The teachers of Europe in everything, they are the first to argue that governments exist for nations, not nations for governments. And as precedents, especially successful ones, govern the world, the Dutch gave the cue for the English Parliamentary war, and the English Revolution, to the American Declaration of Independence, to the better side of the French Revolution, and to the public spirit which has slowly and imperfectly recovered liberty from despotism.

XIII.

THE LAST YEARS OF WILLIAM THE SILENT.

It was no doubt unfortunate for the Dutch Republic, that Orange declined so persistently the sovereignty which the United Provinces pressed on him. Had he taken what they offered, the Dutch Republic would, in all likelihood, have comprised the whole of the Netherlands, except the Walloon Provinces, and would have held the whole seaboard from the mouth of the Ems to Dunkirk. William might have controlled the violence of the Ghent democracy, the intrigues of the Flemish nobles, and the religious reaction which finally made Belgium so intensely Roman Catholic. He might even have baffled the ready genius of Parma, and have extended the military reputation of his country by land as well as by sea. There is no doubt that the refusal of Orange was partly due to a desire of avoiding even the appearance of self-seeking, but it was also due to a belief that the defeat of Philip's tyranny could only be finally effected by the assistance of foreign Powers, France or England, or both. He did not suspect, perhaps no one suspected,

OLD ZAANDAM.

what were the inherent resources of the young republic. In the meanwhile, and till the negotiations with Anjou could be completed, the influence of William was great in the United Provinces.

William believed that the wretched king of France would fulfil the promises which he abundantly made of helping his brother in case the United Provinces elected him as their prince. It was known that Catherine of Medici, the old Queen-mother, was eager that her youngest son should receive the sovereignty of the Netherlands, and it was quite understood that the policy of the Queen-mother was the policy of France. But the courtiers, the *mignons*, as they were called, of the king had been made familiar with Spanish gold, for Philip, who starved his armies, was lavish in bribes to partisans. Perhaps no king spent so much in bribery with such poor results in the end.

This was the time in which Anjou was engaged in that strange courtship of Elizabeth which caused so much amusement and excited so much anger and alarm. While the United Provinces were discussing the terms of his sovereignty, he was in England. While he was absent, Parma besieged and reduced Tournay, the Prince of Orange being most inadequately supported by those whose liberties he was doing his best to protect. The fact is, the disunion of the Provinces led to their being attacked and reduced in detail. Anjou returned to Flushing on February 10, 1582, and was inaugurated at Antwerp. He was accompanied by a train of distinguished Englishmen—Leicester, Sir Philip Sidney, with many others

—who were to assist hereafter in the foundation and strengthening of the Dutch Republic.

And now the first effects of the ban, the outlawry of William, were to be exhibited. On Sunday, March 18, 1582, Orange was entertaining some of his kindred at dinner, as it was the birthday of the Duke of Anjou. As he was leaving the room, a young man advanced from among the servants and offered him a petition. He took it, and the man suddenly drew a pistol and discharged it close to the Prince's head. The bullet passed under his right ear, through his mouth, and the other jaw. He believed, as did those about him, that he was mortally wounded.

The assassin was instantly slain. William was led into his chamber, and the wound examined by the surgeons. It seemed dangerous, but the flame from the pistol had been so close that it had actually cauterised the wound. He was instructed to be silent, and, though he complied, he wrote incessantly.

Meanwhile, a horrible suspicion came over the minds of the Flemings. It was believed that the Prince was dead, and had been murdered at the instigation of Anjou. People remembered the massacre of St. Bartholomew, hardly ten years ago, and the treacherous murder of the bravest and noblest Frenchmen under the guise of friendship and cordiality. But the suspicion was soon allayed. Maurice, the Prince's son, destined hereafter to rival Parma as a general, remained by the body of the murderer. A search was made, and every article found on the assassin's person was carefully secured. On exami-

nation, it was found that all the papers were in Spanish, and that, therefore, there was no evidence of a French conspiracy. The fact was soon communicated, and the relief was great. There had been so much treachery astir that any one might be suspected.

The murderer's pocket contained a dagger. The discharge of the pistol had blown off his thumb, or he probably would have used it. There was a quantity of trumpery charms besides, some religious manuals, a pocket-book containing two Spanish bills of exchange —one for 2,000 and the other for 877 crowns—and a set of writing tablets covered with prayers and vows. The writer invoked the Virgin Mary, the Angel Gabriel, the Saviour, and the Saviour's Son, praying them to aid him in the accomplishment of the deed. He promised to bribe them all with presents at their shrines if he got off safely. It seems, also, that his instigators had persuaded him that after the deed was done he would become invisible.

It was soon found out that the man was Juan Jaureguy, a Spanish servant in the employ of Anastro, a Spanish merchant in Antwerp. Anastro had flown — gone to Calais, it was said; but his cashier, Venero, and a friar, Antony Zimmermann, were arrested. Anastro was on the verge of bankruptcy, and had entered into an engagement with Philip to murder Orange, and to receive 80,000 ducats and the Cross of Santiago for the crime. But he was too prudent to undertake the deed in person. He therefore hired Jaureguy with the sum alluded to. He had then fled to Dunkirk, obtained a passport on

the plea of having important letters from the States admiral, and, before the news came, had got safely into Parma's lines. The bargain made with Philip was signed with the king's hand and sealed with his seal. Venero and Zimmermann confessed their crime, were tried, and executed — by the Prince's request in the least painful manner—ten days after the event.

But the Prince gradually recovered. On the 5th of April, however, there was an alarming hemorrhage from the wound, and it seemed that all hope was lost. But Anjou's physician arrested the flow of blood by simple pressure, a number of attendants, one after the other, keeping their thumbs on the wound day and night. The wound was closed, and on May 2nd Orange went to offer his thanksgiving in the great Cathedral of Antwerp. Unhappily for him, the terror and anxiety were too much for his wife, Charlotte of Bourbon, who died on May 5th, three days after the thanksgiving. She had been forced into a convent against her will, had escaped, and, disowned by her relatives, had married Orange.

Parma, getting news of the attempt from Anastro, and being assured that the Prince was killed, addressed circular letters to the revolted cities, calling on them, now that the tyrant was dead, to return to their allegiance, to the forgiving Philip, and to the holy Inquisition. It is doubtful whether they would have done so without a struggle even if the deed had been successful. As it was, Parma's invitation only made them more resolute. Holland and Zeland now urged that Orange should accept the sovereignty over

these provinces without limitation of time. He agreed to do so, but the formal inauguration did not take place. William was in his grave before all the preliminaries were settled.

As the United Provinces had accepted Anjou for their duke in place of Philip, Parma persuaded the Walloon Provinces that the condition under which the foreign soldiers had been sent away was now removed, and began to move up masses of Spanish and Italian troops. He was not indeed inactive, for he captured two or three important towns, but he waited till he found himself, at the close of the year, at the head of 60,000 picked and trained soldiers. In July, another attempt, also at the instigation of Parma, was made to assassinate both Anjou and Orange by poison. The culprits were detected and duly punished. The younger son of the great Egmont was gravely suspected of being an accomplice. Less than two years before, Orange had befriended him and supplied him with money.

The good understanding between Anjou and Orange remained till after January 15th, when the duke, in contravention of his oaths, attempted to overset the Constitution and seize the Flemish towns. The plot was kept a secret, but the French commanders got hold simultaneously of Dunkirk, Ostend, and other important places. But they were discomfited at Bruges. The attempt was made at Antwerp on the 17th, but the burghers rose, defeated the French troops, and slew 1,500 of them. Anjou escaped. The attempt was known henceforth as the French Fury. Still, Orange was so haunted with the

idea that it was needful to propitiate the French, that he did not at once break with Anjou, and, to be sure, the effrontery of the French prince was equal to any emergency. What really determined him was the discovery that Anjou was willing to sell his position to Parma, and to restore Philip's reign over the United Provinces. Then he told them that there were only three courses open to them—to surrender to Philip and lose everything; to invite Anjou to return to his government; and to fight the thing out with all their means and with all their lives. He preferred the last course, but, unfortunately, he had learned too well that, except in Holland and Zeland, a Netherlands union was only a rope of sand.

In June, 1583, the Duke of Anjou went away, never to return. John Casimir went away also. Matthias, grand duke and pretender, had already gone. There was no one left to make head against Spain but Orange. He married, for the fourth time, Louisa de Coligny. The son of this marriage was Frederic Henry, the successor of Maurice in the Dutch sovereignty, and one of the most distinguished among the succession, unparalleled among nations of illustrious chief citizens of Holland. They were William the Silent, Maurice, Frederic Henry, William the Second, the Third (the English king), and the Fourth. Again the states of the United Provinces offered William the sovereignty, and again he refused it. So he refused the Duchy of Brabant. Meanwhile, Parma was picking up the towns which Anjou had treacherously seized and treasonably deserted. Orange, too, had to endure the treason of his brother-

THE GATE OF ST. CATHERINE AT DELFT.

in-law, Van der Berg. Still, up to the end, he believed it possible to make use of Anjou, who, however, died on June 10, 1584.

Since the outlawry of Orange had been proclaimed, five attempts had been made on his life, with the connivance of Philip, or Parma, or both. A sixth was successful. William was residing at Delft, a little town near Rotterdam, in the summer. His youngest child had been just baptized, and had taken the names of his godfathers, Frederic of Denmark and Henry of Navarre. Here William heard of the death of Anjou.

Despatches bearing on the particulars of Anjou's death had been received by William on July 8th. He demanded an interview with the courier, and a young man, about 27 years old, was introduced. He was said to be the son of a murdered Calvinist, and to be ardently attached to his father's creed. In reality, he was a fanatical Catholic, who had meditated the murder of Orange for seven years or more, had consulted several Jesuits on the best means of effecting his purpose, had forged seals in order to procure credit with his victim, and had been in close communication with Parma. Parma had no high opinion of him, but gave him the usual promise of reward in case he succeeded. His parents were enriched and ennobled by Philip after the deed was done, and the pension they received was secured upon the estate of William the Silent's eldest son.

The man's real name was Balthasar Gérard. He called himself Francis Guion. It appears that he was conscientious in his conviction that Orange was to be

murdered, and that any one who murdered him was serving God and man. The only thing which touched his conscience was the fact that he had forged seals in order to get access to his victim. He was, however, careful to bargain for his reward to himself if he escaped, to his heirs if he fell in the attempt. So suspicious had Parma been of his powers that he left him almost penniless, and Gérard was indebted to William's kindness for the very money which purchased the pistols with which he murdered his benefactor.

At two o'clock on Tuesday, July 12, 1584, Gérard shot William the Silent. In a few minutes all was over. The murderer in the confusion nearly escaped, and had he not stumbled, when close to the moat, on the other side of which a horse was waiting for him, he might have got away. He was caught, brought back, confessed his crime, and gloried in it. Only he concealed Parma's share in the conspiracy. That great captain, however, who had dealt in such matters so often, was rightly understood to be the principal agent in the crime. Gérard was tortured horribly, but bore his sufferings with fortitude and serenity. Had William lived a few days, he would have been simply executed. After two days' torment he was put to death on July 14th.

XIV.

THE PROJECTS OF PHILIP.

When the wisest man in Holland had been murdered, and the greatest general of the age was in the prime of his activity and skill, Philip ought to have had no difficulty in overcoming the resistance of the Netherlands. And when we add to this that the cities were so jealous of each other, that they could not be brought to act together, that they were constantly at strife even in their own walls, were hesitating when they should have been bold, penurious when they should have been liberal, and were being bought and sold by the prince whom they had invited to rule over them, and the nobles whom they knew to have committed a thousand treasons against public liberty, it should have been easy to stamp out opposition. Holland and Zeland, it is true, were uncontaminated. They had refused to recognize Anjou, even when William pressed them to do so, and though they were as yet unconscious of their powers, and could not foresee the great future which was before them, though they were foolishly timid and parsimonious at times when courage and

self-sacrifice would have been the highest wisdom, still they had been made a nation by Father William.

Philip always cherished the widest schemes of conquest or aggrandisement. He wished to achieve the empire of the world. It is true he was no warrior, indeed, he was little better than a clerk. He was no financier, for his revenue was anticipated and mortgaged, and he was living from hand to mouth. He never imagined that any difficulties were in his way, for no one about him during his reign of forty-one years hinted that there was anything which he could not accomplish. It must be allowed that he bore his own losses, which were in fact the losses of others, with amazing serenity. He planned the affairs of the world, the conquest of kingdoms, the assassination of princes, the extirpation of heretics, the election of popes, and a thousand other things, at his writing-desk in the vast palace which he had built among the Spanish mountains in memory of the great victory of St. Quentin, the winner of which had, by Philip's orders, been executed at Brussels. His hand, or rather his pen, was in everything. Let us look for a short time at the principal projects which engaged him, the completion of which was a bar to the rapid conquest of the Netherlands.

The last king of the house of Valois was on the French throne. His only brother had just died, and he had no hope of issue. The heir to his house according to French law, now undisputed for at least two centuries and a half, that females could not inherit the throne or transmit a title to it, was Henry, King of Navarre, and prince of Béarn. Philip treated

the Salic law, as the French law regulating the succession to the crown was called, as an absurdity, and claimed it for his daughter, and whatever husband he might assign to her. In order to achieve this result he had distributed bribes lavishly among such leading Frenchmen as professed to favour his pretensions. Among these was the Duke of Guise, who took enormous sums from him, and, under pretence of furthering Philip's schemes, was doing his utmost, by means of Philip's money, to secure the crown for himself. Over and over again, during the long course of this eventful war, Parma and his army were forced to abandon or suspend some necessary operation in order to further his master's and uncle's designs in France.

Philip laid claim also to the throne of England, and for a long time had designed to subdue it. Elizabeth, it is true, was reigning in it, and it was a cardinal article in Philip's political creed, that subjects should be of the religion of their ruler. But then Elizabeth was a heretic, excommunicated by the Pope, and deposed by the same infallible authority. Philip admitted that the claims of Mary Stewart, who had been in an English prison for seventeen years, were superior to his own, and he therefore intrigued to liberate her, as he hired assassins to murder her rival and gaoler. Her son, who had been King of Scotland from infancy, was a heretic, and therefore out of the question. He would, therefore, be the guardian of Mary Stewart's interests, and having liberated her, set her on the throne. After Mary's execution he averred himself even more to be the heir to the English throne.

He had some little plea for it, for he was descended from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and titular King of Spain. It was by the fact that he represented both the daughters of John of Gaunt, that he had become King of Portugal. After Mary's death Philip's efforts for the subjugation of England were redoubled.

He had been exceedingly anxious to procure his own election as Emperor of Germany. This elective dignity had become, and remained to the wars of Napoleon, hereditary in the house of Hapsburg, and Philip was unquestionally the representative of that house. But after the resignation of Charles the Fifth, the empire of Germany went to that magnificent monarch's younger brother, much to Philip's disgust and wrath. He had, however, never lost sight of what he thought his right, and put forward his pretensions whenever he could. But beside these schemes of temporal aggrandisement, he had to manage the Papacy, to secure the election of such popes as were favourable to his views. So he had to fill the Sacred College as far as possible with his own creatures, and secure a good understanding with them all. For this end money was wanted. An empty purse was no argument at Rome, and it was necessary for him to be lavish. So what with bribing statesmen, hiring assassins, conciliating cardinals, and keeping armies and navies on foot and on sea, this king of universal ambition was sorely put to for money. While the Dutch were inventing new taxes by the score and getting opulent in spite of their sacrifices Philip did not know where to turn, even for the means

CUSTOM HOUSE AND PIER AT HARLINGEN.

to carry on his government. At last he took the desperate step of repudiating his debts, and so of getting into worse straits than ever.

We know a little of his financial position, and how hopeless was the prospect of improving it. Spain, though populous and fertile, was less fruitful for revenue purposes than any European country. In Spain, labour was dishonourable, manufactures and trade were looked down on with contempt, and indolence was thought a mark of gentility. Spanish bigotry and Spanish pride had expelled the most industrious and wealth-producing part of the nation. It may be doubted whether the Italian possessions of Philip paid the cost of their civil and military establishments. The Netherlands, which supplied three-fifths, at one time, of the revenues which his ancestors enjoyed and squandered, were now beggared or hostile. The Flemish artisans had been murdered or exiled, had quitted Flanders in thousands for England and Holland. These wealth-winning people were gone and their places were ill supplied, at least from a revenue-raising point of view, by Jesuits, monks, inquisitors, and bishops.

It is difficult to discover what he got from his possessions in the New and Old World. He had inherited at least all the dominions which Alexander the Sixth, Spaniard, Pope, and profligate, had bestowed on his ancestors. In his eyes the Atlantic and Pacific were Spanish lakes, as much his property, his exclusive property, as the fishponds in the Escurial were. Indians of the Old World, Indians of the New World, from the Northern land of frost to the

Southern land of fire, were as much his subjects as the Spaniards and the Flemings were. In accordance with the gift of Alexander, the whole world outside Europe was under the indefeasible sovereignty of Spain. Now in Philip's reign the mine of Potosi was discovered, and the king had a royalty on all mines in his dominions. But it may be safely alleged that much metal was raised on which the royal dues were not paid. Still it is clear that vast quantities of metallic wealth were annually poured into Spain. The misfortune to Philip's government was that so little of these great riches abode with him. His expenditure was a vast sieve, through which his revenue instantly drained away. Besides, the population of Philip's American dominions was speedily extirpated by the compulsory labour which the Spanish conquest put on them. There is not a single descendant left of the races which Columbus found in the Caribbees. The native populations of Mexico and Peru were attenuated to a shadow of what they were when Cortes and Pizarro made their conquests. To fill up the void which this vigorous and exhausting process had made, and to save the residue of the population, the benevolent bishop, Las Casas, had suggested the importation of negro slaves, and his advice had been followed.

We shall never know all, or much more than a little, of what Philip disbursed annually in bribes. Work of this kind is always done secretly, and neither the giver nor the receiver cares to keep, or at least to expose, a record of the transaction. But it is pretty certain that wherever in any European country Philip had an

interest, or thought he had an interest, he paid and fertilized his agents, though he was impoverishing himself. The age was not nice in receiving money. Kings and nobles, ministers of state and judges, were not at all above taking money or money's worth for their services. Men who wanted favours done, or losses averted, went with cash in their hands to those who were sworn to execute justice between parties.

Of course the greater part of Philip's bribes were wasted. He did not get value received for what he spent. In the nature of things, it was not possible always to carry out a timely treason. There must be opportunities, there must be agents. The opportunity may not come, and a rash attempt, foredoomed to failure, would be worse than any delay, however long and costly. The agents too must be carefully selected. They might turn on those who employed them, and make terms with those whom they professed to betray, or pretended to destroy. One of the men whom Parma hired to murder Orange went straight to the Prince, gave full details of the plot, and remained for his whole life a faithful and useful servant of the States. We do not read that he sent back the money to Parma with which he was supplied. We know that Guise, who took Philip's money, intended to baffle Philip's plans in his own interest; and after the murder of Guise, when his brother and son also took Philip's money, for the same professed aims, they in the end, and for a price, threw over Philip and acknowledged Henry of Navarre.

It is inevitable that the tools and hirelings of bad men will be bad themselves. The doctrines of Machia-

velli were not even wise, shrewd as they seem to be. For one hit which policy succeeds in—for dissimulation and lying used to be called policy in public affairs—it makes twenty misses. Perfidy may not only make its victims cautious, it may make them equally perfidious. At any rate, the man who secures agents by hire for evil ends, need not be surprised if his agents betray him, and he loses both money and reputation. No political system, which has been founded on lying, is discovered to be stable in the end. The ambitious schemes of Philip, and the arts he employed to effect them, were the ruin of Spain. For a long time she was the terror of the nations. Even when Holland pricked the bubble she still seemed formidable.

GRONINGEN.

XV.

HENRY THE THIRD AND ELIZABETH.

THE Queen of England was perfectly alive to the necessity of curtailing or even of extinguishing Philip's power in the Netherlands. She knew what were the designs of the "prudent" king against her, open and secret. She was so well served in the matter of spies, that she knew almost as well as Orange did what passed in the king's cabinet, and at his writing-desk. Walsingham, her best and most far-sighted adviser, was as keen as a bloodhound in scenting out a plot. She knew that if Philip vanquished the Netherlands a descent upon England would certainly be attempted and be probably effected. It is probable that she did not fully understand how Philip's hands were occupied in France, but she knew well enough how little trust she could put in the French king. She did know that Philip was preparing a vast armament, and she had no doubt about its destination. The exploits of Drake had, indeed, delayed the issue of the Armada, but Philip was undeterred by any loss from projects on which he had set his heart. The Armada, how-

ever, did not sail till four years after the murder of Orange.

Charles the Ninth, fourth king of the house of Valois, died in 1574, exhausted by remorse, as we are told, for the horrible but fruitless massacre of St. Bartholomew, which had been perpetrated two years before. Two brothers survived him—Henry, then King of Poland, who became at once King of France, and speedily quitted his old for his new kingdom; and Francis Hercules, Duke of Anjou, whom we have seen before in the capacity of Duke of Brabant, and capital conspirator against the liberties of Flanders, and of Antwerp in particular. Henry was now the last of the house of Valois, his heir being Henry of Navarre, at that time a Huguenot.

Henry was as false as Philip. But he had vices more odious and scandalous in the eyes of the people than any other French king ever had. His reign was one perpetual civil war. At one time he was fighting with his kinsmen of Navarre, at another time with his insurgent nobles. Though he showed no love for his Calvinist subjects he was obliged to respect them and even to conciliate them, for they might help him against the faction of the Guises. Now the people of Paris and some other large towns in the North, who were more fanatically attached to the old religion than even the Pope himself, were determined to curtail the king's power and play into the hands of the Spanish king, or at least appear to do so. With the view of protecting their religion, the nobles founded and maintained an association which went by the name of the Most Holy League,

and finally Madam League. The real object of this association was to make the nobles independent of the king, and in case he died childless, to exclude the heretical Henry from the throne. Philip, as we have seen, intended the throne for his daughter. Guise, who took Philip's money, purposed if possible to occupy it himself. But it was Philip's interest that France should be if possible exhausted and impoverished, and therefore the League was under his especial patronage.

Civil war was chronic during Henry's reign. There was hardly a year of peace during his fourteen years and more of reigning. We have seen that to the last, however, Orange strove to get a French king or a French prince to undertake the sovereignty of the Netherlands, of course under guarantees for the liberty and the institutions of the people. After the death of Orange, Olden Barneveldt, the great Advocate of Holland, carried out his policy, and negotiated with Henry, till the French king, after protracted and delusive playing with them, finally declined the offer made him.

The States intended, had the King of France accepted their offers, to give him a very limited sovereignty in their country. Whether if he had accepted it, or, indeed, could have accepted it, he would have treated his pledges with more good faith than his brother did, may well be doubted. But even as a very limited ruler in the Netherlands, the position would have been highly advantageous to him as King of France. It was from the side of the Netherlands that nearly all the historic invasions of France had been made. When the English tried to make good

ROTTERDAM.

their footing in France, the goodwill of the Netherlands was indispensable to them. Edward the Third of England found Arteveldt the brewer of Ghent, a necessary ally in the fourteenth century ; and the friendship of the Duke of Burgundy in the fifteenth aided the victories of the house of Lancaster, as his enmity arrested them, and finally expelled the English from France.

It was from the Netherlands that Philip was able to win the victory of St. Quentin, and dictate the Peace of Cateau Cambresis. We shall find that Parma with his army in Flanders, raised the siege of Paris, and raised the siege of Rouen. A century afterwards, when France was consolidated, and had become the first military power in Europe, under Louis XIV., all the efforts of the great king were directed towards the acquisition of the Flemish towns. It was here that most of Marlborough's battles were fought and won, the Dutch of that day believing with reason, that the conquest of Flanders by the French would be the ruin of Holland. Had Henry and his mother been able to comprehend the supreme significance of Flanders to the French monarchy, and comprehending it, had they imagined that they would be able to hold them, it seems plain that they should have grasped at the opportunity. Henry the Fourth would have formed a different judgment on the situation, had he been on the throne, and had his hands been free to extend the bounds of his kingdom.

Henry III. declined their advances, and much precious time was lost in vainly negotiating with him ; for, during this embassy, Antwerp was invested and after

a protracted siege reduced. Ghent was gone, Brussels was gone, Mechlin was soon to follow, and freedom was confined to Holland and Zeland. The assassination of Orange was more valuable to Parma than an army of forty thousand veterans; for the master mind whom the cities trusted, and who could, though not without incessant labour, hold them together, was gone.

The Hollanders now turned to Elizabeth. It is necessary to know a little of the position of the great Queen, whose aid, grudgingly and capriciously given, was after all of inestimable value in the early days of the forlorn republic. Elizabeth had succeeded to the throne of a country which had been impoverished by the wanton extravagance and cruel frauds of her father, and by misgovernment in the reigns of her brother and sister. England had been wealthy and powerful a generation or two before; it was now poor and weak. If Elizabeth was penurious, she had need to be. The estates of the crown had been wasted, and the people had been impoverished. Her own birth was ambiguous. Her cousin, Mary Stewart, had quartered the arms of England when she was Queen of France, and never could be brought to disavow the act, even when she was Elizabeth's prisoner. She was excommunicated by the Pope, dethroned in words, and assassins were incited to attack her. She was the perpetual object of conspiracies, all of which were detected and baffled. She had her troubles at home, for Elizabeth was imperious and intolerant, and some of the exiles of Mary's reign had come to England with views

about church government which did not suit her taste. She was extremely poor, her revenue was inelastic, and she was abundantly cautious.

Elizabeth had very sagacious counsellors. Burghley, the most wary of them, was as hesitating as his mistress was. Walsingham was far more clearsighted and bold, and had the temper of Elizabeth squared with his, the queen would have gone far more heartily into the matter. Now the Hollanders wanted two things, money and troops, especially land forces, for the Beggars of the Sea were fairly competent to defend their own shores, and take account of Spanish forces on the water. Elizabeth could supply the Hollanders with some troops, and she sent them some excellent generals of division, though, one must say with shame, some of these, as Yorke and Stanley, were traitors. She would not take the sovereignty of their country on any terms, and always advocated a double protectorate. She was very hard about advancing them money, slow to grant it at all, and always insisting on security for it. It is fair to add that she never got back the whole of the money she lent them, and that her successor released the guarantees, the so-called cautionary towns, for a good deal less than the admitted debt.

She also gave them a commander, or lieutenant-general governor, in the person of the Earl of Leicester, her favourite. Leicester was a handsome man, and of commanding presence. Early in Elizabeth's reign and later on, it was believed that she intended to marry him, not in England only, but elsewhere. He was the son of Dudley, Duke of Northumberland,

executed for high treason at the beginning of Mary's reign, and grandson of Dudley, one of Henry the Seventh's instruments of extortion, who was executed at the beginning of Henry the Eighth's reign. He was also brother of Guildford Dudley, the husband of Jane Grey, who had been styled queen for twelve days.

Leicester was an unfortunate choice for Holland. He had no military experience, and was to be opposed to the greatest general of the age. His head, never very strong against temptations to pride and arrogance, was fairly turned by the deference which was shown him in Holland, and the importance which was attached to his mission. He chafed without judgment at the restraints which the jealousy of the Republic put on his authority. It was difficult for an English nobleman and courtier in those days to imagine that burghers and artizans and farmers had a right to any political opinions whatever, much less to take part in affairs of State. He was in Holland, with intervals, for three years, and was hated as heartily by the Dutch on his departure as he was welcomed at his first appearance. The Queen was angry with him, angry with the Dutch, and should have been angry with herself for having made so bad a choice.

It should not be thought, however, that Elizabeth was not of great service to Holland in the crisis of the republic, despite the errors of her favourite and the treachery of some of her subjects. Their misconduct, mischievous as it was, was atoned for by the valour and conduct of such men as the Veres and

Roger Williams. But it was the destiny and the glory of Holland that she attained her independence and her power mainly, if not entirely, by her own spirit and determination. Holland had in the end to rely on herself, to form her own armies, her own navies, her own commanders by sea and land, and her own trade; and not only to give the world a spectacle of unflinching heroism, but to teach it a thousand lessons for peace or war. Perhaps it was well for Holland that Leicester did not possess the genius of Parma.

XVI.

ANTWERP AND THE ARMADA.

THE Hollanders were negotiating for the transfer of themselves under the forms of a limited sovereignty, so limited that the new Count of Holland would have little more than a titular supremacy, with Henry III. of France and Elizabeth at the same time. Henry at last threw them over. He had little chance of aiding them, less of engaging them in a new fight for their independence, for he had much ado to maintain his own. Guise and the League, Paris and Spain, were perpetually in arms against him, to say nothing of his cousin and successor, Henry of Navarre. By dint of bribes, Philip was assured that he could paralyze the action of France, were the king ever so willing to appropriate the Netherlands, and perhaps secure the throne of France for his daughter when the last Valois king was out of the way. But there was also England to conquer, which Philip thought was an easy task for Parma to accomplish.

Now Parma knew that it was necessary for him to secure the best port in the Netherlands, if this

purpose was to be carried out. The Spaniard, victorious and confident by land, was a very poor creature on the water, and in no sense a match for the water Beggars. Still, with a big fleet in a safe harbour protecting a convoy of veterans to the Thames, much might be done. It does not seem that Parma took much thought of the English sailors, though Drake and Hawkins had already given a taste of their quality.

Now there was no harbour in the Netherlands like Antwerp. Safe, capacious, deep, the Scheldt could hold all the navies of Europe. But Antwerp was in the hands of the patriots, and Orange was no more. Antwerp must be captured. "If we get Antwerp," he used to say, "you shall all go to mass with us ; if you save it, we shall all go to conventicle with you."

Within nine months Parma secured all the cities of Brabant but Antwerp. Ghent and Dendermonde went first. Then Brussels, next them Mechlin, and Antwerp was besieged, to fall also. All this was foreseen as possible by Orange, and before his death the plan of defence was indicated. Orange saw that if Parma could throw a bridge over the Scheldt he could reduce Antwerp. But there was a way of baffling him. If Antwerp could be converted from a river to a sea port, all the efforts of Spain, in the teeth of the Zeland sailors, would be vain. To do this, it was necessary to break down the great dyke and to let the ocean in upon the polders. It would be a temporary measure ; when the siege was baffled, the dyke could be repaired and the lake be again converted into pasture.

And now the siege was imminent, and Saint Aldegonde, the military governor of the place, was about to carry out the plans of the dead Stadtholder, when he encountered serious obstacles. Antwerp was divided into factions, and the military authorities, which at that time should have been supreme, were resisted by the personal interests of trading associations. It was madness, they alleged, to think that Parma could build the bridge. It was madness to submerge the meadows. Besides, the most trusted officers of the republic were strangely insubordinate and dilatory on a sudden. Treslong was negligent, his successor was well-meaning but incompetent, and the commander of the land forces was capricious. The master mind was gone.

During the winter of 1584, Parma was collecting all the materials necessary for effecting that which the Antwerpers believed to be impossible. During this time Antwerp was being furnished with supplies, for the price of food was high in the city, and plenty of skippers are venturous enough to brave Parma's forts. Then the Antwerp magistrates, as if with the view of assisting the blockade, fixed a maximum price of corn, and effectually starved themselves. The sluices were opened it is true on the Flemish side, and this measure ultimately assisted the designs of Parma, by making it easy for him to bring up supplies. When it was too late, those who opposed the piercing of the Blauw Garen dyke was anxious to undertake it. But it was already occupied by soldiers, by ammunition, and by forts.

The breadth of the Scheldt at the point where

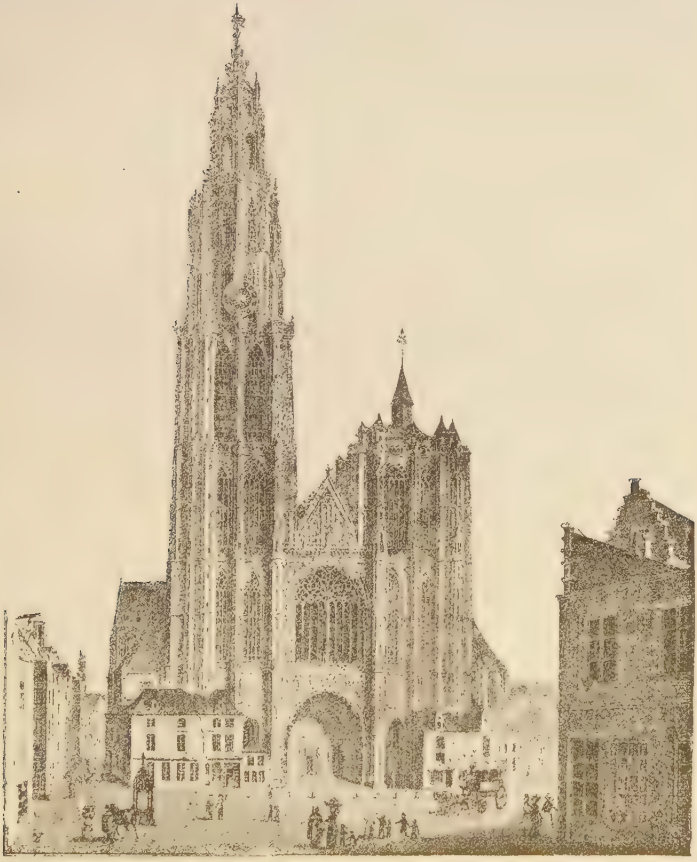
Parma was building his impossible bridge was 2,400 feet, and its depth 60 feet. The piles on which the bridge was built were driven 50 feet into the ground below the river, and yet nothing but light skirmishes were attempted by the Antwerp garrison and militia, in one of which the bravest and most energetic of the commanders was captured. On February 25 the bridge was completed, the deeper parts of the river being covered by a floating bridge, and the Scheldt was closed. And the marvel was that while Parma was performing his great feat, his army was almost without supplies, and he was totally neglected by Philip.

Now there was living at Antwerp an Italian, one Gianibelli, a man of great skill in chemistry and mechanics. He had once offered his services to Philip, but weary of the affronts and delay he met with in Spain, he vowed to do him a mischief. He had counselled the city of a plan for effectually victualling it, but had been snubbed. He then entreated them to give him some ships from the city fleet, in order that he might make an attempt on the bridge. With difficulty he induced them to give him two, in the hulls of which were built what were virtually floating mines, containing several thousand pounds of powder. Besides these, several fire-ships were sent down the river. One of the vessels was to be fired by a slow match, the other by clock-work. As the fire-ships floated down, Parma massed all his troops on the bridge. Of the two infernal hulls, that which was provided with a slow match burnt out harmlessly. The Spaniards boarded

the other, when a terrible explosion followed. A thousand Spaniards were instantly slain, a breach was made in the bridge, and had the Italian's expedient been followed by action, Antwerp would have been relieved, Parma baffled, and the war of independence probably shortened at once. But Antwerp was again ill-served by her commanders, and Parma was allowed to restore his bridge without hindrance from the besieged, or even their allies outside.

Gianibelli's efforts had indeed failed for a time. But three years afterwards, when a still more significant struggle was being waged, the memory of the devil ships, as they were called, did more to baffle, disperse, and destroy the great Armada, than the attacks of Drake and Effingham. The cry of "The Antwerp fire-ships!" sent a panic through the whole of the bravest Spanish soldiery.

At last the besieged determined to make the effort of piercing the dyke. The first attempt was unsuccessful, owing to one of these misunderstandings which always were playing into Parma's hands. On May 26th they were more successful. They occupied the dyke after a fierce struggle, and instantly began to break it. But even then the same fatal incapacity showed itself. The leaders of the expedition returned to Antwerp to rejoice over their victory. Parma also returned, the Hollanders were driven from their work, and the dyke was repaired. On August 17th, the capitulation was effected, and Antwerp was reckoned among the obedient cities thenceforth. But its trade and manufactures were destroyed. The



THE CATHEDRAL, ANTWERP.

Dutch closed the port almost as firmly as Parma had, and the heretics, who had all the industry and nearly all the capital, migrated to Amsterdam. They were succeeded by the Citadel and the Jesuits. It was believed indeed that with the fall of Antwerp Holland and Zeland would be early and easily subdued. As it was their spirit was strengthened, their resistance was more stubborn, their resources were developed. As yet, however, no one guessed what would be the future of the republic.

The English court understood in its own way, clumsy and selfish to our eyes, but infinitely honest in comparison with the conduct of other courts, what was the interest of Holland, and what was the interest of England. France was smooth and false, England was rough and not over ready. The Dutch believed that France was strong, England weak. It was strange that they should entertain the former view, but not strange that they should fancy the latter. Nor is it strange, considering the practice of the times, that Elizabeth corresponded with and tried to overreach both friends and enemies. But for the history of Holland, the presence of Leicester in that country, the intrigues of the English queen, and the alternations of hope and disappointment to which her action gave occasion, have no interest for the general reader. There was a party in England which desired peace with Spain. The marvel is that any one believed that Philip was even commonly honest. It is more important to see how men who had nothing to do with intrigues had been indirectly serving the cause of public liberty, by showing the intrinsic weakness of despotism.

Drake had gone round the world in 1577, and had picked up a good deal of experience, and some property which belonged to the King of Spain, on his voyage. There was to be sure no war declared with Spain, but, on the other hand, there was no peace ; and Drake, much to the inconvenience of Philip, was making war on the Emperor of the Indies, though on his own account. By an instinct which could hardly have been accidental, he fastened upon those regions in 1586 from which Philip got his supplies of money, and very much disconcerted the prudent monarch. Now as all the hopes of Philip depended on his treasure ships from the New World, any interruption of supply was exceedingly serious to Parma, who occupied the position of fifth mortgagee on Philip's treasury. There was first the Spanish administration, next France, next the Pope, next the preparations for a descent on England to be satisfied, before Parma could expect or get a maravedi. Now a maravedi is about one-sixteenth of a penny sterling, or one-eighth of a cent.

Drake had been sacking and burning the Spanish towns in the Gulf of Mexico. "He was a fearful man to the King of Spain," said Burleigh, "The most contemplative ponder much over the success of Drake," said Parma. But the secret negotiations for peace with Spain were still carried on by the English court, and Parma believed they were genuine. So there had been carried on negotiations for the marriage of Elizabeth with Anjou. Meanwhile Parma advised an invasion of England, in October, 1586. Meanwhile Sidney was killed in the

skirmish at Zutphen, and Leicester continued to make himself distrusted, and finally detested in Holland. Yorke and Stanley, entrusted with strong places in Holland, betrayed them to Spain, and the English began to suffer in the estimation of the Dutch, for the treason of their countrymen. Parma got possession of Sluys, a convenient port for the English invasion.

But on April 2, 1587, Drake sailed from Plymouth with four of the queen's ships, and twenty-four others from London and other places. It was a joint-stock buccaneering adventure, the stimulants to which were profit and patriotism. Just after he had started, the queen sent to recall him. I cannot but think that she intended to be too late. Any way, he heard that a great store of ships and munitions of war were being accumulated at Lisbon and Cadiz. On April 19th, Drake entered the bay of Cadiz, destroyed ten thousand tons of shipping, and with them the stores which Philip was collecting. Thence he sailed to Lisbon, and destroyed a hundred more vessels. He evaded easily the great galleys of the Spaniards, and did his mischief before the face of the Spanish admiral. Then he took a rich prize with its treasure on board, and having now "singed the King of Spain's beard," as he said, he sailed back to Plymouth, to be disavowed by Elizabeth. But he had delayed the Armada.

The designs of Philip in 1588, the year in which the Spanish Armada actually sailed, were well masked. It was said and believed that the object of the armament was the New World, in which a great and

wealthy country was to be conquered. But the real purpose of the expedition was not concealed, either from the leading statesmen of Holland or from some of the public men in England, least of all from the freebooters, Drake and his friends. The Dutch before the year was half over, effectually blocked every outlet for Parma and his troops.

The English navy was in number 197, in tonnage 29,744 ; the seamen were 15,785. But only one vessel was over 1,000 tons, and only ten over 500. The tonnage of the Spanish fleet was 59,120, the size from 1,200 to 300 tons, and the number on board was about 30,000. The fleet was to pick up Parma's army of 17,000, and to land them at Dover. The admiral of the fleet was to be Santa Cruz, an experienced and competent commander. But before the Armada sailed Santa Cruz was dead. His place was filled by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who was far from being his equal in experience or ability. The Armada sailed from Lisbon at the end of May, met with rough weather, had to put into Corunna, and to wait till July 22nd. On July 29th they first got sight of England, and Englishmen got sight of them, and swarmed out of the numerous ports of the south coast in order to deal with them. Their first encounter was on Sunday, July 31st. On Saturday August 6th, the Spaniards reached Calais roads, the weather, as yet, being favourable to them. The English fleet followed them, and anchored a mile and a half from them. The Dutch fleet was guarding the coast, and effectually preventing Parma's exit, or a junction between him and Sidonia. The moon was

at the full. A conference of captains was held on Lord Howard's vessel, the *Royal Ark*.

Winter suggested that some fire-ships should be sent amongst them. Gianibelli was then in England constructing fortifications on the Thames, and the English remembered the Antwerp devil-ships, the Spaniards remembering them still better. So on Sunday, August 7th, they determined on making the attempt. The day had been fine, but towards evening the clouds rapidly gathered, thunder was heard, and a tempest was evidently at hand. At midnight the Spaniards saw suddenly six burning vessels bearing down on their lines. There was an instant cry of "The fire-ships of Antwerp!" and an instant panic. Every cable was cut, and many of the vessels got entangled. Some were burnt, and in the morning many were disabled, and the rest driving towards the dangerous coast of Flanders.

The rout and the ruin of the Great Armada is the best-known fact in the history of all English-speaking nations. It is unnecessary to describe it here. It is sufficient to say that Philip, apparently convinced that his own resources for his own purposes were boundless, heard of the destruction of his fleet with equanimity, and instantly set to work to repair the loss, and make a fresh venture, as soon as ever the opportunity for action might present itself. So convinced was he, or so convinced were his advisers that the model of the Spanish navy was, under ordinary conditions, the best which could be devised, that from this time, even to the establishment of peace with England and Holland, the dockyards of Spain

kept reproducing the same awkward and unmanageable type of vessels, and thereby offered the Dutch and English admirals every opportunity of inflicting on Spain the most crushing defeats on sea, even when the odds seemed desperate, and the Spanish force seemed overwhelming.

The lesson which the Dutch and English learned from these encounters, and especially from that with the Armada, was of the highest significance in the history of both nations. They came to the conclusion, and this not without reason, that they were invincible on sea, and the conviction, as time passed on, assured them of the certainty. As far as England was concerned there was now no doubt as to the policy of Spain, even if the stories which are told of Elizabeth's blindness to the facts, have any real foundation. But both Dutch and English had no difficulty in understanding that they could, while baffling the enemy's attempt on their own countries, destroy his strength by assailing him in the regions from which he drew his wealth, in those territories which he called his in the New and Old World, by reason of the donation of Roderick Borgia or Pope Alexander the Sixth.

Up to the time in which the truce of 1609 was conceded, Holland, as we shall see, carried on this warfare against the distant possessions of Spain, and instructed the other nations, that the two great oceans were not a Spanish lake, reserved for the King of Spain only. Even when the cowardly and arrogant pedant, James Stewart, succeeded Elizabeth on the English throne, and hastened to make peace with Spain, the peace in fact only extended to

Europe ; and the practice of the English, soon turned into a proverb, "No peace with Spain below the line," constantly weakened the Spanish monarchy and finally ruined it. Spain was destroyed as a European Power by the dream of Philip after universal empire.

Still for a long time she was conceived to be dangerously powerful. The glamour of a great force often survives for a long time the reality. Cromwell, who saw very far in military matters, was still under the delusion that the power of Spain was a danger to Europe, when that monarchy had lost all its force, and it was not till another danger had come to Europe, from the ambition of another monarch, that Spain ceased to be a terror to statesmen.

XVII.

THE LAST YEARS OF PARMA.

ALEXANDER FARNESE, Duke of Parma, lived for a little more than four years after the wreck of the Armada. During these four years many things happened, and the course of events out of Holland materially assisted the political development and union of Holland itself. Similarly too, the extirpation of Protestantism in the obedient Netherlands, and the atrophy of Romanism in the Dutch Republic, led to the limitation of the political system of Holland. The ten provinces were alienated from the Dutch as much by the religion which they professed, as by the government to which they submitted, and by the poverty which they had to endure. Had William the Silent lived, it is probable that the whole seaboard would have been one state, and every part of the Netherlands, except perhaps the Walloon Provinces, would have been united in one great commercial and manufacturing republic. When less than two centuries and a half after the murder of William, the whole country was formed into a single kingdom,

the elements of union were utterly absent, and it became necessary for Europe to recognize the separate nationality of Belgium.

Late in the year 1588 Leicester died. He had resigned his position in Holland, but his partizans did great injury to the Dutch by surrendering Geertruydenberg to Parma. This great general had suffered his first check at the hands of Maurice, by being repulsed in the winter of 1588 from Bergen-op-Zoom. On the other hand, another expedition went from England to Spain, landed at Corunna, and wasted part of the Spanish king's dominions.

Meanwhile much of Philip's energies and nearly all his money were expended on his intrigues with the family of Guise, and the malcontents in that country. The Duke of Guise had humiliated the king on the famous day of the Barricades (May 12, 1588), and Henry had fled from his capital never to return. On December 23rd in the same year, the Duke and his brother were murdered at Blois, by the king's command. On the 1st of August following, after Henry III. had reconciled himself to his kinsman and successor, Henry IV., who was besieging Paris, he was murdered by Jacques Clément.

Now Philip claimed the succession of France for his daughter, and it was necessary for him to vindicate whatever claims he possessed against Henry, and to devote all his energies to this end. So the Dutch had some breathing time. He even twice detached Parma from his campaign in the Netherlands, whence he could be ill spared—once in August, 1590, when he compelled Henry to raise the siege of Paris; and

again in April, 1592, when he similarly constrained him to raise the siege of Rouen. Both these exploits showed the greatest military skill, though the last was practically the close of Parma's career.

During this time a greater master of the art of war than even Parma was growing up. Maurice, second son of William the Silent, had been studying his calling with unremitting industry. And now that Parma and Philip were so occupied with the affairs of France, it seemed that Holland could carry on her warfare with greater hope. But the first thing was to create and drill an army. The next was to see that it was regularly paid. The third was to familiarize it with victory, and to make it confident. This was the work, and the successful work, of Maurice. There was a great deal to be done. Three Englishmen—Yorke, Stanley, and Wingfield—had betrayed or surrendered the important towns of Zutphen, Deventer, and Geertruydenberg, while a Netherlander had similarly betrayed the capital of Friesland, Groningen.

On February 26, 1590, the Dutch surprised the important fortress of Breda, without the loss of a single man, and shortly afterwards Maurice reduced a number of other towns and strongholds. Meanwhile, as the towns in the obedient provinces were wasting, those of Holland were rapidly growing in population and opulence. The administration of affairs, though it was already liable to that risk of disunion which was in the end to be fatal to Holland, was, in the face of the common enemy, patriotic and vigorous. Already the Dutch were forming that splendid navy which was to create an Indian empire, to annihilate the reputa-

tion of Spain, and even to measure itself against the growing power of England. The government of the country was in the hands of the States-General.

While Parma was gone to the relief of Paris, Maurice was able to give proof of his military abilities. On May 23, 1591, he surprised the fort of Zutphen, and on the 30th he captured the city. On June 10th, after a severe struggle, he got possession of Deventer. On Sept. 24th he reduced Hulst, near Antwerp. On Oct. 21st Nimeguen surrendered. In May, 1592, Maurice laid siege to Steenwick, and in July stormed it. In July Coevorden was besieged and gained, and the young Stadtholder was rapidly recovering the strong places of Holland from the enemy. His victories were triumphs of military engineering, but it may be doubted whether his successes would have been so rapid had it not been that his great enemy was constrained by Philip's policy to be absent from the country which he was governing, and from the plans which he had formed.

For Philip had set his heart on dethroning the heretic Henry, and Henry was a very difficult person to deal with. No one could cope with him, though nearly his whole kingdom was against him, but Parma and his Spaniards, and the Spaniards were nothing without Parma. Already under other commanders they had yielded to the Dutch, and their general himself had been discomfited by young Maurice. But Maurice was a scientific engineer. He was not yet the equal of his rival in strategy, though he already surpassed the captains who had been trained under Parma.

PRINCE MAURICE.

During the campaign before Rouen, and after Parma had forced Henry, on May 20, 1592, to raise the siege, the Prince determined to capture a small town which commanded the Seine. Here he was wounded in the arm, and was disabled from active operations. Still, he needed all his powers in order to effect his retirement into the Netherlands, and he achieved this by a masterly manœuvre. He now returned to Paris, and after recruiting himself with a few days rest there, he went away to Spa. But beyond the temporary success of his expedition he had achieved nothing, for the person whom he was associated with was engaged in baffling him.

Mayenne, the brother of the murdered Duke of Guise, was engaged in a treble intrigue. As the paid, and well-paid, agent of Philip he was, to outward appearance, engaged in procuring the throne for that monarch. He probably knew all the while that the French would never accept Philip, or his daughter, or his daughter's husband. But at the present moment he had to show as clearly as possible that Philip's objects were his. Then again he had his pretensions to the throne himself. He caused it to be rumoured that he represented the family of Charles the Great, who had been deposed some seven centuries before by the family of Hugh Capet. It is true that his elder brother's son was in the way, but in times of revolution obstacles are greatly diminished, and are easy to be overcome by sanguine and determined men. Then, in the third place, he was pretty well convinced, when he weighed all the circumstances, that Henry of

Navarre would win in the end, and that he had better accommodate matters with him. The fact is, Philip had been engaged all his life in overreaching others, and was regularly overreached himself. The only persons who served him faithfully were those whom he mistrusted, as Don John of Austria and Alexander, Prince of Parma.

For while Alexander was astonishing all men by his genius and his fidelity to Philip, while he was resenting in the angriest manner the suspicions which were circulated about his real objects, and using every means in his power, legitimate or infamous, on Philip's behalf, his character was studiously blackened to the King of Spain, and apparently to the King of Spain's entire satisfaction. Without resources, either in the country which he held and governed, or from the King of Spain either, with soldiers mutinous and starving, he still kept an undaunted front and a loyal purpose, and scared them, who might have dealt with him if they had known the facts of the case, by his calm and unflinching courage.

The men whom Philip had sent him as counsellors were spies on him. It is perhaps not wonderful that they distorted his acts and maligned his purpose. The age was so pre-eminently treacherous ; lying and chicanery had been so persistently identified with statesmanship, that it was all but impossible to trust any one. It was part of the bitterness of Parma's lot, that having been false to every one but his master, his master believed his servant to be false to him also.

Farnese found out that he had been traduced, and

complained of it bitterly. It is not a little strange that in that atmosphere of deceit and secrecy, where every pains was taken to prevent the leakage of facts, the most dangerous and therefore the most hidden particulars were regularly betrayed. Parma's enemies wrote to the king in cypher, and Parma got to know the contents of the letters. The correspondence of all the parties is now before us, and we find that the Governor of the Netherlands contrived to learn that which was intended for the eyes of Philip only. He tells the king plainly how indignant he is at these unfounded calumnies, and the king tells him that he has never received the despatches, or, if he received them, has forgotten the contents. But there they are, the correspondence of the spies, scrawled over by Philip, the letters of his ill-used general, and the copies of Philip's own letters to his viceroy.

At the very time when Philip was assuring his nephew of his entire trust and confidence in him, at the time in which he was urging him to undertake further expeditions into France, and declining to send him the necessary funds for the purpose, and at the time when Parma was, with characteristic sagacity, informing Philip of the state of affairs in that kingdom and in the Netherlands, the King of Spain was secretly planning to supersede his nephew, and to take him prisoner if necessary. He had sent an emissary, during the time in which Parma was relieving Rouen, with instructions to remove Parma from his office, by fraud, if possible, by force if necessary. Even at the last, he bade him lead his army into France, and the

general was on the eve of obeying the commands of his treacherous master when the hand of death was laid on him. An old man, though still, for his years, in his prime, he died on Dec. 3, 1592. He was forty-eight years old at his death.

HAARLEM.

XVIII.

AFTER THE DEATH OF PARMA.

It is difficult to say whether the freedom of the Netherlands was served better by the death of Farnese or the recognition of Henry as King of France by the principal persons who had intrigued with Philip, had taken his money, and were now negotiating with Henry for more money and place and pardon. Certainly a more rapacious and shameless crew never existed than the French nobility. Fortunately for Holland, the miller and the weaver, the sailor and the trader, were in the ascendant in the Dutch Republic. Had that republic been cursed by nobles, even like those in Flanders, it might well have been despaired of. Henry of France renounced the Reformed religion for that of Rome, was willing, as he said, to win his kingdom by hearing mass, and his future career little concerns us.

After an interval of little more than a year, a successor was appointed to Parma, a middle-aged, fat, gouty, lethargic person, the Archduke Ernest of Austria. In the meantime, Maurice had not been

idle. He had captured Geertruydenberg in June, 1593. He got possession of Groningen, the capital of Friesland, in July, 1594, and now the republic was constituted, almost within the limits from which so much that was heroic and wonderful was to proceed for a century or more. But for a long time the Hollanders strove to recover the whole of the Spanish Netherlands. Had they succeeded, their history would have been a different one, for it is certain that the narrowness of the republic, and the great demands made on it for the work which it had to effect, were the ultimate causes of its weakness and decay, at a time when Europe still wondered, and believed that its resources were exhaustless. The Hollanders were unable to bestow freedom on the Flemings.

After two ineffectual and easily-discovered plots, in which Philip had bribed assassins to murder Elizabeth and Maurice, after the Hollanders had spent much treasure and blood on behalf of Henry of France, who was quite prepared to abandon them and make peace with Spain as soon as ever his own purposes were served, and after Henry had been absolved by the Pope, and the Archduke Ernest had died, Philip determined to surrender the Netherlands to his son-in-law and daughter. The son-in-law was a brother of Ernest, Archbishop of Toledo, and a Cardinal. It was therefore necessary that he should be released from his vows and his orders, in order to fulfil his new function of secular prince. With him was sent that son of William the Silent who had been kidnapped twenty-eight years before, and had been carefully educated by the Spanish Jesuits. All

the memory that he now retained of his father was a profound reverence for his name and character.

The English and the Dutch now determined to make a concentrated attack on certain of the Spanish ports. The exploit of Drake, ten years before, gave, no doubt, its stimulus to the expedition of 1596. Drake and Hawkins, indeed, had just passed away. But there were Essex, Raleigh, Howard, and Vere to take part with the Dutch admirals. They reached Cadiz on June 30th, and destroyed the Spanish fleet there, landed their troops, captured the fort, drove the Spanish troops into headlong flight, and got possession of city and citadel. They would have captured the fleet also, but the Spanish admiral, who, eight years before, had commanded the great Armada, chose to destroy his fleet rather than suffer it to fall into his enemies' hands. It was an object with Essex and Vere to fortify Cadiz and hold it, or at least to make a dash at the great fleet of Indiamen which was hourly expected. But Lord Howard peremptorily refused to permit either attempt, and the fleet sailed back to England.

The capture and sack of Cadiz had no immediate military results. In some particulars it was even a disaster, as much of the spoil taken at Cadiz was the property of Dutch merchants, who were, during the time that they were waging war with Philip, carrying on a lucrative trade with his Spanish dominions, and resenting with the greatest wrath any interference with that trade, as they did a century later. Indeed the profits of the trade with the Indies, now for the most part in Philip s hands, were vital to the Dutch, because

from it alone they regularly derived the means for carrying on the war. Their own Indian Empire, soon after to be so important, was not yet founded, hardly imagined. Hence they were reproached with supplying the very means by which Philip could carry on the war, and were said to have sold the Spaniards the gunpowder with which Dutch cities were assailed and Dutch soldiers slain. But, on the other hand, the trade operations of the Dutch were equally essential to Philip, for without them he could have been excluded from the markets for which these products were designed, and from the profits which he found it so necessary to realize.

But the military importance of the sack of Cadiz was enormous. The Dutch and the English were not afraid of the Spanish war vessels on the Dutch and English shores, and had more than once given a good account of them. The English, too, under Drake, had singed the King of Spain's beard. The Dutch had now done the same thing under the guns of a fortress and a fortified city, and with scarce any loss to themselves. Henceforth we shall see that the exploit of 1596 suggested to the Hollanders far wider and bolder schemes, which they were not slow to carry to a successful issue. In these expeditions the English would have shared had not James of Scotland and England set his heart on peace with Spain and a marriage alliance between that decrepid family and his own. Unfortunately, Holland was so weakened by the temporary withdrawal of some of her best troops to Cadiz, that she lost an important port to the Spaniards. In the same year a treaty, offensive and defensive, was made

between England, France and Holland, and Philip, despite the destruction of his fleet at Cadiz, fitted out another Armada, with which he attempted to attack England by landing on Ireland. But the Second Armada had the same fate as the first. It was overtaken, shortly after it set sail, by a tremendous storm, in which forty vessels foundered with five thousand men on board.

In the beginning of the year 1597, Maurice, now reinforced by his friend Vere, attacked and routed the flower of the Spanish forces. It was the first time that the Spaniards had suffered so severe a reverse at the hands of Dutch and English troops. The success was due to the admirable discipline and training which Maurice had given to his cavalry. Perhaps the victory was to some extent aided by the fact that in the November preceding Philip had solemnly repudiated all his debts, and thereupon effectually destroyed his own credit. During the year Maurice continued his campaign, and completely liberated the navigation of the Rhine from the Spanish forts which barred its use. Meanwhile the financial policy of Philip was followed by a wholesale mutiny of his army. In the next year, 1598, little was done beyond the conclusion of a treaty of peace between Henry and Philip, ineffectual negotiations between Holland and Henry to prevent this result, and a renewal of the engagements between Elizabeth and the States. The Peace of Vervins, signed on May 2nd, was a full recognition of the right of Henry to the kingdom of France. Four days afterwards Philip formally handed over the Netherlands to his daughter and son-in-law,

the Cardinal Archduke Albert, and with them his pretended sovereignty in Holland.

A few weeks after this formality Philip was on his death-bed. He had aspired to universal sovereignty, and he was now passing away from all authority and all power. He had sacrificed millions of lives to his ambition, millions to his superstition, and he was now perishing in tortures and agonies more terrible than any which had been inflicted by his generals and inquisitors. But so convinced was he that he had been all his life in the right, that he bore all his sufferings with patience, and constantly asserted, as he lay wasting away, that he had consciously wronged no one. During his long reign of forty-two years he had been the destroyer of mankind. It is not clear whether he preferred open violence, assassination, or treachery, but he used each or all with alacrity whenever he had the opportunity or thought the act expedient.

We, in these days of civil and religious liberty, find it difficult to recall the temper of an age when, over the greater part of the Christian and civilized world, these familiar experiences were not only unknown, but the vindication of them was held to be treason, and heresy worse than treason. The old doctrine was that men should hold their lives and their property on the will of their sovereign, and though this doctrine was never accepted in England or the Netherlands, the only parts of Europe where, at the epoch of the Reformation, the doctrine was disputed, it was insisted on in every Court and inculcated from every State pulpit. Before the Reformation it was still more

uniformly affirmed that the creed of every man should be taken from a priest living in an ancient Italian town, elected by a corrupt and ambitious body of prelates, and not infrequently stained with grosser and more hateful vices than any secular potentate was. This is the account which writers of an age when no schism was dreamed of give of the Popes of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries.

The deference paid to the doctrine and discipline of these persons, the unhesitating obedience which they demanded or exacted, was more degrading than the worship of the bull Apis in Egypt, or of the Lama in Thibet, because the authority of the Pope was constantly exercised in enforcing that which the moral sense of all but the most depraved secretly or openly repudiated. It is true that for a long time these criticisms were whispered rather than uttered, were conveyed in a language which was not understood, and carefully noted by those whose books were never published ; for that Authority took measures, never known in the history of any other religion, to suppress all free thought by the most relentless cruelties. Even when the revolt came it was the transference of the subjects' faith from a priestly to a royal despot. The doctrine of the Lutheran and the English episcopalian was, and long remained, that the religion of the prince must be the religion of the subject, and that all other opinion must be proscribed and punished. Calvin and Luther were as intolerant, though not cruel, as Torquemada and Titelmann.

The Dutch were the first to permit, and to acknowledge, religious toleration. Nothing shows how

slowly men have been emancipated from priestly despotism than the fact that the word toleration, that is, the endurance, without any severe penalties, of religious differences, should be hailed as the first charter of religious liberty. This toleration the Dutch were the first to concede. They could not indeed permit the open performance of Roman Catholic rites. But it must be remembered that in the sixteenth century the faith of the Roman Church was a gigantic conspiracy, unsleeping and unscrupulous against any man, any state, any race which dissented from it. To give way to it, when its supremacy was repudiated, was to be treasonable to liberty, to hope, to progress, to justice.

XIX.

DUTCH ENTERPRISE.

HOLLAND, and especially Amsterdam, had become the *entrepôt* of the trade of North-western Europe. Excellent as was the agriculture of Holland, it did not supply food for its inhabitants, for the skill of its agriculturists was almost entirely cattle raising and market gardening. It is true that the development of these industries was hereafter, as we shall see, to have a world-wide effect. But Holland did not grow wheat enough to find bread for a tenth of its inhabitants. But the markets of the country were abundantly supplied. The ancient forests were gone, but Holland was the principal timber mart of the world. Its towns were built on peat marshes where not a pebble could be found on the surface. But its quays held the produce of vast marble granite and stone quarries. It distributed the products of the West and East, of America and Asia. It throve on the decay of the obedient provinces. It absorbed what had been the trade of Antwerp, what had been the manufactures of Ghent and Bruges, and it added to them of its own.

MERWEDE TOWER.

Commerce was as necessary to Holland as were political and religious freedom, and it carried on its commerce, not only with friendly nations, but even with its bitterest enemies, and to the last, it stood out resolutely and successfully for the freedom of its trade. It did not, and it could hardly be expected to do so, recognize the same rights of freedom of trade for other nations, and we shall see hereafter that the decline of Dutch commerce was due to the restrictions which it strove to put on the commercial liberty of others, as soon as it obtained the mastery in the Indian seas, and the one-sided commercial treaties which it negotiated with nations whom it had not the power or the inclination to subdue. But in those days the interest of nations overbore the passions of princes. Piracy and buccaneering was practised between the subjects of sovereigns who were nominally at peace with one another, and trade was carried on between the subjects of princes who were at war with each other. In no case was this a more marked and obvious fact than in the trade of the Dutch cities with the Spanish ports.

After the union of the kingdom of Portugal to that of Spain, Philip, or his advisers, began to see that they could cripple the Dutch by interfering with their trade at the Spanish and Portuguese ports, and efforts were made to stop it. But these were incomplete and interrupted. There were no manufactures in Spain from which Spanish navies could be equipped, and Spanish factors could not buy materials at Amsterdam unless the Government winked at Dutch trade in Cadiz and Lisbon. Besides the Spaniards wished to

sell, and the only factors whom they could employ in North-western Europe were the Dutch. Hence for a long time after the Atlantic had been a Spanish lake, and Holland had been at war with Philip for more than a generation, the Dutch, though hardy and enterprising sailors, had not ventured on the Cape Passage, or even across the Atlantic, but had taken up the trade of the East and West where Spain had found it convenient or safe to fix its locality for Europe, and permit the distribution of its products. The English, it is true, had sailed round the world, though no steady trade had been the result of this venture. It is not till the end of the century that charters were given to traders in the Levant, and the English East India Company was chartered, after the monopolies of Alexander the Sixth had endured for a full century.

The first stimulus given to maritime enterprise and discovery in Holland was the publication of Linschoten's work on the East. This man was the son of a Friesslander, who had that passion for travel and foreign experience which, when wisely directed, has bestowed such benefits on mankind. Linschoten lived for two years at Lisbon, and then, getting employed among the attendants of the Archbishop of Goa, thirteen years in Bombay. Here he patiently collected all the information he could amass as to the country in which he lived, as well as the character of the voyage to the East, its trade winds, harbours, islands, and other matters of knowledge to the sailor, accompanying his work with maps and charts. This was the first information given to the Dutch, and indeed to the

world, for the Spaniards and Portuguese kept their knowledge of the navigation in these regions a profound secret. Linschoten's voyages was published in English in 1598, and his map of the Indies is alluded to by Shakespeare in his play of "Twelfth Night." In Holland it excited an intense and lasting interest.

Now, for a very long time, indeed up to very recent times, it was believed that a passage could be found by the northern seas to China and India, and should such a discovery be successfully made and carried forwards, that a journey of several thousand miles would be saved. There was an ancient belief too, as old as the time of Herodotus, that if one could once get through the barrier of ice and snow, the navigator could sail into a new region of perpetual spring, sunshine, and calm. The age was still uncritical, or at least unscientific, and the fable of Hyperborean felicity of a race which lived free from the vicissitudes of climate was still gravely believed. Linschoten, Plancius the preacher, and Maalzoon, were eager to attempt the North-east Passage, and Barneveldt lent them his powerful patronage. There were indeed no maps of the regions lying beyond the White Sea and the port of Archangel which had been sought for disastrously by Sir Hugh Willoughby, fifty years before; but there were strong beliefs, which were accepted as certainties by these enthusiastic Dutchmen, that the voyage would be easy and successful, and would enable Holland at little risk to herself to take her Spanish and Portuguese rivals in the rear.

In those days the appliances of navigation were far

behind those of modern experience and science. The vessels were clumsy and ill-built, the nautical instruments were rude and few, and the victualling of ships was so imperfect, that a prolonged voyage turned the best-appointed ship into an hospital within a few weeks. Men had no experience of an Arctic winter and no expedients by which to meet or mitigate its rigour and severity. The weapons with which they might defend themselves from wild animals and fierce enemies were to be sure the best then known, but awkward to handle, and slow to use.

On June 5, 1594, the first expedition to the Polar seas was begun. The voyagers started in three vessels and a fishing yacht, the vessels being supplied by the cities of Amsterdam and Enkhuizen, and the province of Zeland. Barendz was captain of the Amsterdam vessel, Linschoten of the other two. The former of these visited the islands of Nova Zembla, and accurately mapped them. Linschoten passed through the Straits of Waigatz, between these islands and the mainland, and made for the open sea which he was informed would be found there. After sailing for a hundred and fifty miles, he was met by violent storms and huge ice-drifts, and saw that it was impossible, at least on that occasion, to achieve the object of his expedition. On August 15th he discovered Barendz's ship, and the little fleet reached Amsterdam by the middle of September. They had strange stories to tell of the Polar bears, and the seals, and of a new and terrible kind of animal, the walrus; which half in sport, half in rage tried to sink their boats with its long protruding tusks.

Linschoten was convinced that they should reach China by the North-east Passage, and next year Barneveldt and Maurice, as well as many of the States-General, shared his belief. They resolved to send seven ships in 1595, and to load them with broadcloths, linen and tapestries for the trade which they were to open up with China. So long a time did they take in these mercantile arrangements that the summer was half over before the fleet started. Barendz, Linschoten, and Jacob Heemskerk were at the head of the expedition. They sailed as before through the Straits of Waigatz, and landed on Staten Island on September 2nd. Here they were attacked by a white bear, and two of their number were slain and half-eaten by the beast before they could dispatch him. They soon were forced to return with the bear's skin and a supply of what they took to be diamonds, and were picking up when the bear attacked them. They got back to Amsterdam on November 18th, and the States-General, greatly disappointed, refused to have anything more to do directly with Arctic navigation, though they offered a prize of 25,000 florins to any navigator who should discover the passage, and a proportionate sum to any one who might fail of success, but might make a praiseworthy venture.

Barendz and others with him determined if possible to assay the North-east Passage again. They got two ships from Amsterdam, and started on May 18, 1596. On June 19th they reached a latitude which was within ten degrees of the pole. To the land which they found here they gave the name of

Spitzbergen. But in July the ice began to close about them, and they resolved if they could to avoid it. They got back to Nova Zembla, and after various experiences with ice and Polar bears, reached the extreme north-eastern part of the island. Here they found open water, and were full of hope that the end of their voyage was achieved. But they were soon undeceived, and the growing masses of ice drove them anew into the harbour. On September 1st the ship was frozen fast into the bergs, and it was clear that they would have to pass through an Arctic winter. Fortunately for them the shores of the island were covered with drift-wood, borne by ocean currents from far distant places. They built themselves a hut, and gathered stores of fuel for the long winter that was coming. Part of their provisions was bears' flesh, and indeed the bears would have eaten them, if they had not been on the alert, and retaliated. On October 2nd they finished their house, sixteen men being left of the expedition. On November 4th the sun rose no more.

It was now too cold for the bears. They disappeared, and white foxes took their place. The Dutchmen caught them, ate them, and clothed themselves in their skins. It was time, for their European clothing was frozen stiff. They nearly in December stifled themselves, by lighting a coal fire and stopping up all the crevices in their hut. Fortunately, and before it was too late, one of them forced open the door. As often as they could, they constantly made their nautical and astronomical observations. On January 24th the sun just reappeared, and on the 27th the whole

disk was seen. Soon afterwards the foxes disappeared, and the bears came back as hungry and ferocious as ever.

On April 17th they saw open sea in the distance. In May they determined to start back home. But there was no hope that they could again use their ship, and they had only two open boats to make the voyage in. On June 14th they began to return. On June 20th Barendz, though still full of hope, died of exhaustion. After many adventures, but without further serious danger, they arrived at Amsterdam on November 1st. They had been absent for seventeen months, and for ten of these months they had suffered the extremities of an Arctic winter. The expedition closed all experiments after a North-east Passage and the sea of the Hyperboreans. Heemskerk returned to make a great name for himself elsewhere, and to be as great a terror to Spain as Drake had been.

In 1595, the Dutch reached the East Indies by the Cape Passage, and began the establishment of that great institution, the Dutch East India Company, of which we shall hear shortly. In 1598 another fleet started for the purpose of passing through the Straits of Magellan into the Pacific, at that time supposed to be the only way to the other ocean. Of the fleet which made this voyage one only returned to Holland. The Dutch had simultaneously explored the North and the South Poles.

XX.

THE DUTCH INDIES.

INTERRUPTED as the Dutch trade with Spain and its dependencies was, that of England was still more impeded, and, in consequence, the Dutch had practically obtained a monopoly of Eastern produce in North-west Europe. Now of all Eastern produce the most generally in demand was pepper. The ordinary price of this spice had been from 2s. 8d. to 2s. 9d. the pound, and the Dutch having got the trade almost entirely into their hands, raised it from this price to 4s. or even 8s. The Queen therefore determined to erect an East India Company among her own people, and on December 31, 1600, a charter issued constituting that trading association which in course of time established the Anglo-Indian Empire. The Queen, in order to encourage the trade, not only conferred a monopoly on the Company, and empowered the members of it to inflict heavy penalties and forfeitures on interlopers, but exempted the traders under the Company's charter from all customs duties for four years. As far as pepper went, the results were satis-

factory, for from this time forth, the price of pepper to the English consumer was very rarely above 2s. the lb., and was frequently less. The first capital of the English East India Company was £72,000.

On March 20, 1602, the Dutch East India Company was formed. The capital of the Company was to be 6,600,000 florins, or £550,000, so much more rich, or so much more assured were the Dutch merchants. Of this capital Amsterdam was to provide a half, Zeland a quarter, and the residue was to come from the other Dutch cities. The direction of the Company was after a time to be proportionate to the rate contributed by each of the contingents. The fleet which sailed from Holland was of the same character with the capital of the Company, and the powers which the States-General bestowed on their directors and their agents are like those which Elizabeth conferred on the English Company. It is to be observed that this association amalgamated the private companies which had hitherto carried on their traffic without the general sanction of the States-General, and therefore consolidated a trade which was already in existence.

In our days, it would be unwise and unjust to confer a monopoly of trade upon any joint-stock company, and to bestow on the members of such a company the power of punishing those who intruded on the privilege so conferred. But it was a very different matter in those times. In the first place, they had to contend against the absolute power of the Spanish government. In the next, the Dutch and the English were a hundred years later in the field than their rivals. In the third place, there was need for an im-

posing display of strength, in order to secure the good-will and anticipate the possible treachery of the Eastern potentates with whom the new adventurers had to deal. Now such objects required the expenditure of a great deal of money not only in fleets, which were quite as much armed cruisers as merchant vessels, but on permanent works, ports, and factories, and it was obviously unfair that they who contribute nothing to the outlay should share in the gain which the expenditure of others secured. It may be observed that the first English voyage was directed to those Eastern ports with which the Dutch were already familiar. We shall see that in time this rivalry led to awkward entanglements, and in the end to serious quarrels. The trouble was all the greater, since a year after the foundation of the Dutch Company Elizabeth died and James became king.

In 1605 the Dutch East India Company sent out its third fleet to the East. The second of these fleets had established forts and factories in Malabar, and had established friendly relations with the princes of Sumatra. The third captured Amboyna from the Spaniards, and secured the whole town and island for the Company. The next object of the Dutch was to get possession of the five islands on which alone at that time the clove grew. For the monopoly of this spice Spaniards, Dutchmen, and Englishmen long contended, and warred sedulously. It was probably introduced into Europe by the various routes from the East from very early times, and was in great request. To obtain a monopoly of it for themselves the Dutch thought no efforts and no sacrifices too

great. The Spaniards claimed the islands under the grant of Roderick Borgia. The Dutch seized them as prize of war. The English, who had ceased to care for the Pope, disputed the prize, as they disputed the original title. Nor was it possible, however anxious James was to cultivate peace with Spain, to enforce the same sympathies on his subjects, especially when they learned how great a prize there was to win.

The Dutch fleet liberated the King of Ternate, one of the Spice Islands, from the Spaniards, and chastised the King of Tydor for preferring the Spanish alliance. They captured the Spanish fort, and drove the Spaniards out. They got possession of the Moluccas, and of the clove monopoly. In 1607, the States-General erected the Dutch merchants, who traded or buccaneered in the New World into a West India Company, with the sole right of trading with the eastern coast of America from Newfoundland to the Straits of Magellan, with the whole Pacific coast and Africa from the tropic of Cancer to the Cape of Good Hope. This was a fresh rent in the Bull of Borgia, and some results came of it.

In 1602, the Dutch founded the city of Batavia in Java, reviving the ancient name of Holland in the tropics, and selecting characteristically a swamp for the site of their city. Batavia became the headquarters of the Dutch East India Company, and is the headquarters of the Dutch Colonial Empire to this day. But during the whole time that the first war lasted, the Dutch were extending and strengthening this armed trade of theirs in the East, at the expense

of Spaniard and Portuguese, defeating their navies, storming their forts, and proving to the Oriental rulers, who had hitherto no knowledge of any Powers but that of Spain and Portugal, that there was one other race at least, which was more than a match for these Europeans, with whom alone the native rulers had been hitherto familiar. It may be well imagined that the successes of the Dutch admirals in the Eastern Archipelago, were beginning to make even the most obstinate among the Spanish ministers eagerly desirous of peace, even at the cost of not a little humiliation.

Perhaps as good an illustration of Dutch warfare in the Indian seas as could be given, is the sea-fight of September, 1606. The Dutch admiral, who had been for three years past cruising in these seas, and had been picking up spoils from trade and war, determined to lay siege to the Portuguese town and fort of Malacca. He had eleven small ships, fourteen hundred men, and a native prince for his instruments. The last was indeed no particular good, for his soldiers, though picturesque, were worthless ; and it was not difficult to understand how easily Spain and Portugal were able to give effect to Borgia's Bull. So when the Dutch admiral attempted to make use of the Sultan of Johore's soldiers for the purposes of a scientific siege he found that they were quite untrustworthy, and that it would be madness to expose his own troops to the pestilence and heat, which were sure to be more formidable than the enemy was. He gave up his siege works, and simply blockaded the fort.

Now at this time the Spanish Viceroy, Alphonso De Castro, with a fleet of fourteen great galleons, four galleys, and sixteen smaller vessels, summoned the Sultan of Acheen to build a fort for his own subjugation, to give up all the Netherlanders in his dominions, and to pay tribute to Philip III. The Sultan, who knew now what sort of trust could be reposed in the Netherlanders, refused to obey, and when force was used, met it successfully, for he repelled the Spaniards, inflicting considerable loss on them. Informed of the danger in which Malacca was, De Castro moved with all his fleet thither, and encountered the Dutch admiral Matelieff on August 17th. The battle was indecisive, though the Spaniards were in overwhelming force. But De Castro contrived to raise the siege of Malacca. A month after a small part of the Spanish fleet had sailed away, and Matelieff persuaded his comrades with some difficulty to attack the remainder. He sailed back to Malacca, and entirely defeated the fleet. The rest fled into the harbour, and there, in order to save themselves from falling into the hands of the Dutch, the Spaniards set fire to the remainder of their vessels. Having gained these successes against overwhelming odds, the Dutch admiral returned to Amsterdam, gave an account of his proceedings to the States-General, and received their hearty commendations.

Now the Court of Brussels, the Archdukes made by the gift of Philip II. on his death-bed, the sovereigns of the Netherlands, and the paper lords of Holland, were beginning to be weary of this long, costly ruinous war. Their pride, however, made them slow

to recognize the inevitable. It gradually dawned upon them that they should certainly fail, if they strove as they had striven for forty years, to reduce the Dutch to submission, to extirpate their religion, and set up the Holy Inquisition anew in the thriving cities of the Republic. But there was one thing to which they might cling—the exclusion of the Dutch from India and America. If they could succeed in negotiating a brief truce, they might impoverish their ancient foes by destroying their trade, and when the truce was over, might attack them with renewed resources. For the Eastern trade of Holland had prospered so greatly that if she could keep this she might believe that the Baltic trade, her earliest achievement, might be considered of secondary importance. Now the English were already becoming successful rivals of the Dutch in this northern trade, while they lagged far behind them in Eastern enterprise.

The negotiations for peace, commenced three full years before the result was finally secured, constantly broke down when the demand was made that the trade of Holland should be curtailed, or practically speaking, destroyed. It might be alleged that there was no precedent for a sovereign treating with his rebellious subjects and acknowledging their independence. Such a result was at variance with all the principles and all the practice of public law in Europe. Again, that a community should decide for itself what its own public worship should be, and what toleration it would grant to other religions, without taking the least into account what the religion of their nominal ruler was, was shocking, almost flagi-

tious. At times the Courts of Spain and Brussels seemed content to concede the reality, if the States-General would recognize the fiction of Spain's supremacy in Church and State.

But they might yield all this if they could only stop the Hollanders from trading in the East and in the West. This was the real pivot on which the whole negotiation turned. There were men among the Hollanders who desired peace. Such was probably Barneveldt. There were more who would let the war go on interminably. Such was certainly Maurice; such were the vigorous Dutch captains who traded and pillaged so successfully. But Barneveldt would not have accepted a ruinous any more than he could a reactionary peace; and Maurice, especially as all Europe favoured a pacification, and Holland ran the risk of standing alone, could not refuse a peace which left his country in the possession of all that it had fought and suffered for. So the peace came, on the basis of recognizing existing facts, and passing the question of the Dutch trade over in silence. The Republic had gained its ends.

XXI.

THE ARCHDUKES AND THE WAR.

BUT it is necessary that I should go a little back from the reference to the truce of 1609, referred to in the last chapter, and perhaps repeat my story. Philip was dead, and the Archdukes were Regents in Brussels. Just before Philip's fatal illness he made up his mind to transfer the Netherlands from the Crown of Spain to his daughter and his daughter's future husband, the Archduke Albert. The union, though formal, was not believed by the Hollanders to be complete, for when the negotiations for peace or truce were dragging along, the Dutch statesmen insisted that the King of Spain should renounce his sovereignty over Holland as the Archdukes agreed to renounce theirs.

The Archduke Albert was the brother of the German Emperor. He was a Cardinal, and Archbishop of Toledo, the richest see in Spain. Hence it was necessary when he was appointed Governor of the obedient provinces in 1596, and Commander-in-

chief against the revolted provinces, that he should get permission from the Pope to lay aside his clerical profession. He did not indeed succeed immediately to Parma, for a brother of Albert's, the Archduke Ernest, filled the place of Governor for about a year, and died, for the Low Countries were during a time as deadly to governors as they were to soldiers. The Cardinal was almost thirty-five years of age when he was appointed to this office, and he was two years in it before Philip could make up his mind to the practical severance of the provinces from the Spanish Crown, and to the marriage of the Cardinal with his daughter. In the first year of Albert's government the English and the Dutch destroyed the Spanish fleet in the Bay of Cadiz, and sacked the town.

Though the Archduke was not to be compared for an instant with such men as Don John and Parma, his military career was not unsuccessful. But these successes, and particularly the capture of Calais and certain adjacent forts, assisted in making the alliance between Elizabeth, Henry of France, and the Dutch more intimate and sincere. So important did these successes seem, that in 1596 Philip sent a second armada with a view to the invasion of England, eight years after the first had failed. Like the former, it was destroyed by a tempest. But in 1597 Maurice won the decisive battle of Turnhout, and for a time annihilated the Spanish army. The victory was decisive, not because it finished the war, but because it proved to the Hollanders that they could meet the Spaniards in battle with good hopes of success.

But Philip had inflicted on the governor whom he had sent to the Low Countries a far greater injury than Maurice and the King of France were able to compass. On November 26, 1596, the King of Spain repudiated all the debts which he had contracted, and took again into his hands all those domains, revenues, and taxes which he had pledged for the payment of the interest on his debts. The effect was immediate and disastrous. The Cardinal had carried on the war by bills of exchange, and we are told that in one day two and a half millions of these bills came back dishonoured. In most of the commercial cities of Europe merchants and bankers were ruined by scores. Frankfort and Genoa were impoverished, and Antwerp was despoiled of all that had been left to it by frequent plunderings. The Archduke in order to keep any forces about him was constrained to sell his plate. The repudiation of Philip's debts was a turning-point in the history of the War of Independence, for in the year 1597 Maurice contrived to win nine fortified cities to the Republic, and to strengthen its frontier. But, on the other hand, the Dutch were weakened by the practical desertion of Henry, who was seeking to make peace with Philip, and in the end effected it by the Treaty of Vervins, signed on May 2, 1598. On September 13th of the same year Philip died.

The successor of Philip the Second, whose life was a long war against civil and religious liberty, was his son of the same name. No two persons could be more different than father and son. The old king insisted on transacting all the business of the vast

empire over which he ruled himself. It was, of course, impossible that he could do this well and efficiently, or anything speedily. But he worked diligently at his prodigious task, and wore himself out over it. Mischievous and hateful as his career was, ruinous as it was to every part of his empire where he could maintain his authority, he believed that what he did was to the glory of God and for the ultimate good of man ; and perhaps no man ever laboured for his ends so thoroughly and so persistently as Philip the Second did. His son did absolutely nothing. He surrendered himself at once into the hands of his favourite, the Duke of Lerma, and transacted no business whatever. He was as orthodox as his father, and was as unwise as he was orthodox, for he achieved the final ruin of Spain by the banishment of the Moriscoes. But he had not, even for a day, a will of his own. Now the Archdukes became practically independent of the Spanish Crown, and it became possible for peace to be contemplated, though owing to the perfidy of Henry of France, and the poltroonery of James of England, the result was delayed.

Elizabeth survived her brother-in-law and enemy four years and a half. She never failed to recognize, capricious and poor as she was—and I am persuaded that much of her caprice was due to the straits she was in for money—that the defence of the United Provinces was the defence of England, and that the complete reconquest of the old inheritance of the house of Burgundy would be more than a menace to her kingdom and his people. But Elizabeth was exceed-

ingly poor. England was not then a country which manufactured for the world, as it came to be two centuries later, or traded with the whole world as it did a century and a half after the Queen's death. The kingdom was then relatively poorer than it had been a century before, when the clothweavers of Flanders depended absolutely on England for their raw material, though the export of wool was still the most important English staple. It is true that at the conclusion of her reign she granted a charter to the East India Company, nearly at the same time that the Dutch founded theirs, by enrolling all the East India merchants into a corporation. But from the beginning the capital of the Dutch company was eight times that of the English, and the trade was for many a long day twenty times as lucrative. Historians in modern times criticize Elizabeth's policy and her acts without informing themselves of the means which she had at her disposal. Elizabeth made every effort which parsimony could aid to improve her finances. But it was not till nearly half a century after her death that the charters which she granted and the enterprise she favoured began to be remunerative either to the English people or to the royal treasury.

Henry of France, though he had to fight for his throne, and to change his religion in order to secure it, was acknowledged at last by his arch-enemy Philip, and perfectly understood how unable Spain had become to harm him. He formulated, as one cannot doubt, the purpose which remained the policy of France from his day to our own, the acquisition of all Western Europe from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, and

with them the appropriation of Flanders and Holland. For the possession of the Archduke's inheritance every great continental war which France waged was carried on. Belgium was the battlefield of Europe from the War of Independence to the fight at Waterloo, in pursuance of the leading French idea. Nor do I doubt if the issue of the war of 1870 had been different, that Belgium at least would have fallen a prey to the Second Empire. Now nothing could suit the aims of the French policy more than a war in the Low Countries which, by weakening every one, made the whole district an easier prey to France. This interpretation of French history could be confirmed by a thousand facts.

After the death of Philip the Second, and for a few years afterwards, the war languished. Both sides were for a time exhausted. Maurice of Orange with difficulty kept up a small army, and the Spanish forces chiefly maintained themselves with the plunder of the Duchy of Cleves, contiguous to, but no part of the ancient inheritance of the house of Burgundy. In fact, the expedition into Cleves was private war levied on part of the German Empire, the feeble Emperor Rudolph, being utterly incapable of defending the province. All that Maurice could do was to defend the Dutch frontier. It is probable that at last the Spanish Government saw that Dutch trade with Spain and its dependencies, however important it might be to Spain, was vital to the United Provinces, and therefore began to forbid it under heavy penalties. They could not indeed extinguish it, for the machinery of a preventive service was as yet undiscovered.

SPINOLA.

But they could cripple it, and weaken Dutch tactics by narrowing Dutch commerce.

During the few years which intervened before the final settlement of the twelve years' truce, some military events of first-rate significance occurred, and another important personage appeared on the scene. The events are the battle of Niewpoort, the siege of Ostend, the foundation and exploits of the Universal East India Company, and the great naval battle of Gibraltar Bay. The person who appears on the stage is the Marquis Spinola, who for a time gave some hopes that the Forty Years' War might, in a few years more, be concluded in accordance with the policy which Spain had persistently advocated.

The investment of Niewpoort and the battle of the same name occurred in 1600. The States-General at the urgent instance of Barneveldt resolved on an invasion of Flanders, with the object of weakening the Archdukes, who were now forced to rely almost entirely on the resources of the obedient provinces for the means of war, and it was resolved that the town of Niewpoort should be attacked and captured. Niewpoort is a town on the sea-coast, at about eight miles west of Ostend, strongly fortified, and at high water on an island. As Maurice and his army marched through West Flanders, the Flemings, instead of welcoming him as a deliverer, looked upon his army as doomed to destruction, and when they did not avoid his soldiers by flight, plainly showed that they were reconciled to the despotism under which they were living. The march took thirteen days, and any surprise of the town was now out of the question.

The Archdukes were seriously alarmed, and the late Cardinal bestirred himself to meet this emergency. He even won over the mutineers, who, as was customary when their pay was in arrears, had seized on a town, and constituted themselves an independent army, living by forced contributions on the surrounding district. Before Maurice had reached the object of his expedition, the Archduke had collected a considerable army, and set out to meet him. His arrival was unexpected, and many of the positions which the Dutch commander had seized in order to fortify and protect his communications with Ostend were surprised. Maurice was caught in a trap in which it was necessary that he should be victorious, or his army be destroyed, and the Republic probably ruined. To win a battle he saw what was best to be done in the emergency, and he took his measures accordingly. He determined to send his cousin Ernest with a portion of his force to check the Archduke till such time as he could concentrate his own troops on what he knew would be the field of battle. But the troops under Ernest were seized with panic, and offered little resistance to the Spanish charge.

The delay, however, was considerable enough, and the check was long enough to enable Maurice to collect his troops from both sides of the water. The army was in order of battle when the news came to the commander that his cousin's detachment was routed, and that the Spaniards were marching on them. The battle was fought on Sunday, July 2nd, on the sea-coast and sandhills. After various changes, in which the battle seemed lost or won, a

final charge of the republican cavalry decided the day, and the Spanish forces fled in confusion. The Archduke escaped with difficulty, and his army was annihilated. But no other result of the victory ensued. The Dutch and their allies had proved that they could make a stand against the Spanish veterans, and defeat them in a drawn battle. They had already proved to be their masters at sea. But they did not capture Niewpoort or Dunkirk, and so clear the channel of the privateers. There was, indeed, one result of this campaign. With it begins the feud between Maurice and Barneveldt, and in the end the execution of the Advocate in the square of the Binnenhof at the Hague, near twenty years afterwards.

The town of Ostend had long been held by the Dutch, and was now the only part of Flanders in which they had a foothold. They had used it as a convenient place from which to sally forth, and make forays on the obedient Netherlands, and many a Flemish country squire was captured and held to ransom by the Ostend garrison. At last the Flemish states urged that it should be besieged and that the Archduke should, as they said, remove this thorn from the Belgic lion's foot. In order to encourage him they offered the governor 300,000 florins a month. Ostend was then a fishing village, round which the Dutch had raised the most efficient fortifications which the age could construct, while, on the other hand, no less than eighteen fortresses had been built near it by the Archduke, in order to repress the incessant incursions from the town. So on July 5, 1601, the Archduke began a siege which was the most memorable and protracted that modern warfare has ever heard of.

The peculiarity of the siege of Ostend was that the town was not and could not be blockaded. The Dutch were dominant on the water, destroying at their pleasure and with little loss to themselves, the huge, unwieldly galleons of their Spanish enemies. With small vessels and far fewer men, the Hollanders disabled and sank fleets which were constantly, and on the same clumsy lines, built with the object of subduing them. Now the harbour of Ostend was always open, and it was easy to send men and provisions, and even building materials into the town throughout the whole siege. All that the assailants could do was to batter away at the fortifications, to mine and to blow up the walls, and, as it were, to dig away the ground on which Ostend stood. It is difficult to understand why the States-General held so obstinately to the sandhill on which the town stood, and almost as difficult to understand why the Archdukes wasted so many lives and so much money on the reduction of the town, for the loss which the obedient provinces suffered from the Ostend foragers was as nothing to the cost incurred for the reduction of the stronghold. While the siege was going on, and all the resources of the Spanish governor were being lavished on the destruction of Ostend, Maurice was gaining much more than an equivalent in the capture of strongholds, and particularly in the acquisition of Sluys, a far more important place than Ostend.

The garrison defending Ostend, and indeed the force attacking it, was composed of all sorts of nationalities. Every one who was interested in the art of war, visited

during the course of the siege the fortifications of the town, or the trenches of the besieging army, and generally took part in the struggle on one side or the other. In the town at least a fourth part of the defenders were Englishmen, whom the Queen kept reinforcing. The garrison was commanded by Sir Francis Vere, one of those military adventurers of high birth, who attached himself early to the fortunes of the Dutch Republic and the service of Maurice. But despite the efforts of the garrison, it was on the point of surrendering on the eve of Christmas Day, in the first year of the siege. By an ingenious and not very honest device, Vere entered into negotiations with the Archduke, cajoled him with promises, and kept him quiet till reinforcements arrived from Holland. The general assault which was planned for Christmas Eve was postponed till January 7th, was made then, and was repulsed with enormous loss to the besiegers. After the failure of this attempt, pestilence destroyed more of the besiegers and of the garrison than the sword did. The siege continued through the whole of the year 1602, without much progress being made, for many of the Archduke's soldiers mutinied, seceded from the army, and under the name of the Italian republic seized a Flemish town, levied the means of support from the country and entered into communications with Maurice. The Archduke tried the remedy of excommunication, but with no effect.

Meanwhile certain brothers of a wealthy house in Genoa, Gaston, Frederic, and, above all, Ambrose Spinola, took part in the struggle. The first of these

had settled in Flanders, and had been turned into a Flemish noble. The second took to privateering, was put into command of a Spanish fleet constructed on the old lines, was quickly and entirely beaten, with the loss of all his ships but one, by a couple of Dutch vessels, the whole force on which did not equal that on one of the eight galleys which Spinola commanded. This happened on October 3, 1602. But in the following year, on May 25th the Genoese volunteer put to sea with eight other galleys, was attacked by five small Dutch vessels, was defeated and slain. The siege of Ostend was still going on when Elizabeth died on March 24, 1603, and James Stewart succeeded. For a while the new king seemed disposed to take up the cause of the United Provinces more eagerly than Elizabeth had.

In October, 1603, the Marquis Spinola was made Commander-in-chief of the Archduke's army. On condition of his obtaining this office he had engaged to raise the funds necessary for the prosecution of the siege and the war from the wealth of his own family, and from his credit with the Genoese financiers. He had never undertaken military operations before, but in a short time he showed that he had natural abilities in the art of war, which made him no unworthy rival of Maurice. At first, indeed, great discontent was expressed at the rash experiment of entrusting the fortunes of the army to an untried adventurer. But he soon won the confidence and esteem of his troops, and captured Ostend, by the slow process of entire destruction, on September 20, 1604. The siege had lasted more than three years and three months, and

over a hundred thousand soldiers had perished in the struggle. Meanwhile Maurice had captured a complete equivalent for Ostend in the town of Sluys, which had been Frederic Spinola's headquarters.

AMSTERDAM.

XXII.

THE UNIVERSAL EAST INDIA COMPANY.

In 1595, after vainly endeavouring to discover a passage to India and China by the north-east and the frozen ocean of Siberia, the Dutch essayed the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and shortly afterwards that of Southern America by Cape Horn. A century before, Alexander the Sixth had granted in the fulness of his power the whole of the New World to Spain, and the whole of the Indies to Portugal. Spain and Portugal were united by Philip the Second, and in theory, the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, became the private property of the King of Spain, from all commercial intercourse with which all nations indiscriminately were warned. For a long time the Dutch had limited their trade to Europe, but as time went on they attempted, at first only by private ventures, to give effect to the information which Linschoten had given them.

The English queen had chartered the English Company on December 31, 1600. On March 20, 1602, the States-General granted a charter with the sole

right of trading by the Cape of Good Hope, and the Straits of Magellan. The existing traders were invited to associate themselves with the new company, whose privileges were allowed to them for twenty-one years. They had no option. For the time the capital was enormous, and according to the policy of the States-General, the capital stock was distributed through the several cities, for half was to be supplied by Amsterdam, a fourth by Zeland, and the residue by four other cities. The affairs of the Company were regulated by a board of seventeen directors, and the Company had large powers, in the name of the States-General, of making war and peace, of building forts and factories, and of entering into treaties with native powers. The first two fleets sailed in 1602 and 1603, on each occasion towards the end of the year.

This was the beginning of the Dutch East India Company, supposed and with reason to be the cause of the downfall of Portuguese supremacy in India and the Spice Islands. Its career was similar to, and only less remarkable than that of the institution chartered by Elizabeth in 1600, and reconstructed in 1708. It founded an empire as the English Company did, the extent of which was greater than that of the country in which its chief office was. But the Dutch East India Company was from the beginning far more under the control of the States-General, and became more immediately related to the Dutch Government, than the English Company was to the British Parliament or Administration. In the end, though the possessions of the Dutch company still belong to Holland, their intimate relations were destructive to

the credit of the Bank of Amsterdam, for when Holland was overrun by the French at the commencement of the great continental war, the treasure of the Bank was gone, having been lent to the East India Company in defiance of the Bank's charter and the oaths of the Amsterdam Council.

The object of the Dutch company was first to procure a monopoly of the trade, next to keep up the prices of East India produce, *i.e.*, the spices which were procurable from that part of the world only. We cannot, in our day, quite understand how eagerly our forefathers desired to procure Eastern spices. Cinnamon, ginger, pepper, mace, nutmegs, and most especially cloves, were in universal demand. The profit on the trade was enormous, for in the home of their origin they were cheap enough. They were to be obtained nowhere else, and some of them were found in only a few islands. A pound of these spices was often, before the Cape Passage was discovered, worth as much as a quarter of wheat, and at feasts, a seat near the spice box was more coveted than one above the salt. I have noticed sometimes that when a considerable guest is entertained by an Oxford or Cambridge College, and the college happens to be out

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of spice, they are obliged to give an enormous price for such a scanty supply as the local grocer could furnish them with.

For a century this trade was in the hands of the Portuguese. Then the Dutch dispossessed the Portuguese, and took effectual means for maintaining their monopoly, for they bribed the natives to destroy all trees, except those whose produce was sold to the Dutch factors, and having thus limited the supply, they fixed the price at their own discretion. The policy was in the end ruinous, and for two reasons. In the first place, the Dutch East India Company was doing that to other nations, which they resented and refused to submit to when it was the policy of Spain. Hence they invited, and could hardly complain of, rivalry and even active hostility. The quarrels of the English and Dutch, continued for generations, were the outcome of the spice monopoly. In the second place, trade did not under these artificial restraints, increase as rapidly as capital did. Hence at a very early date the interest of money was absurdly low in Holland. It may be added that in order to defend this system by all the means in their power, the East India Company borrowed largely from the deposits of the Bank of Amsterdam, and while they were getting a miserable rate of profit on a restricted trade, they were plunging hopelessly into debt in order to strengthen their policy.

The exploits, however, by which the Dutch secured their early conquests were almost as prodigious and against nearly as overpowering odds as the victories of Cortes and Pizarro. They were even more remarkable,

because the combat was with Europeans, who were furnished with the same appliances for warfare as they were. The difference lay in the way in which the appliances were handled. For example, in 1602, the Portuguese admiral with more than twenty-five vessels sailed to Java, in order to punish the Eastern potentate who had allowed the Dutch to trade with him. There chanced to be a Dutch captain with five small trading vessels, the united crews of which did not equal those on board the Portuguese flagship. But he did not hesitate to attack and disperse the whole armada, sinking some, capturing others, and putting all to the rout. In the same year, Heemskerk, who had passed a winter in Nova Zembla, captured a Portuguese armed merchantman, with only a small vessel, and distributed a booty of a million florins among his comrades. These instances might be multiplied, and it is no wonder that the United Provinces convinced the princes and people of the Spice Islands that Holland could protect them against the Spaniards and Portuguese. By 1605, the Dutch had succeeded in expelling their enemies from the district which they coveted. It is no marvel that when the negotiations for peace began, they resolutely refused to relinquish their East India trade.

But the most remarkable naval battle during the whole war was that of the Bay of Gibraltar in 1607. Partly to protect their own commerce, partly to annoy that of the enemy, and in some degree to remove the consequence of a mischance which had occurred the year before, the States-General determined to send Heemskerk with twenty-six small vessels to the

Spanish coasts, with general instructions. The Dutch admiral soon discovered that there was no immediate prospect of prizes, but an opportunity for measuring himself against the Spanish war fleet, then in the Bay of Gibraltar, and on the look-out for Dutch traders in the Levant. Heemskerk determined to attack the Spaniards in their own waters. The battle was joined on April 25th. The Spanish commander had fought with eminent success at Lepanto, nearly thirty-six years before.

When the Dutch vessels sailed into the bay, the Spanish admiral inquired of a Dutch prisoner, whom he had on board, what those vessels were, and was much amused when he was informed that they were certainly Dutch, and that they were coming to offer battle. The battle soon commenced and was soon over. Both the admirals were slain, but the Spanish fleet was totally destroyed, the crews, and the soldiers put to the sword, and Spain was pretty well convinced that the war, which had now lasted for over forty years, would not be crowned by any final victory of hers. Victories, so complete and crushing as these, made the reconquest of the Spice Islands, and the forcible extinction of the Dutch East India Company, and the restoration of Spanish influence in the Indian seas, more than ever a remote contingency. Holland swarmed with men of the stamp of Heemskerk, and when one of these sea kings met his death, there were dozens to take his room. Eagerly as the Spaniard might desire to recover the Empire of the Indies, the claim was an impossible dream. Besides the resources of Spinola began to fail. Nothing but victory could avert bankruptcy, and the victory did not come.

The real danger to Holland was from that Power whose future had not yet been discovered, which had hitherto done great services to the Republic, which already, as the United Provinces were approaching within measurable distance of their independence, was cooling towards them and was rapidly developing that bitter trade animosity which made the two great mercantile countries open or secret enemies for a century. Nor in the nature of things could such enmities be obviated. The United Provinces and England deliberately adopted monopoly as their principle. At first, and for a long time, it was difficult to discover any other form of trade. Private enterprise could not satisfy the conditions on which alone these mercantile relations could be successfully attempted. Only wealthy joint-stock companies could equip armed merchantmen, build forts and factories, and sustain by arms the settlements which they had made. To allow intruders, after such outlay was incurred, might be chivalrous, but was not, according to the ideas of the time, at all business-like. But in the end, settlements of this kind for mere business purposes are never successful. The Dutch East India Company became like the English company, an empire, with conquests, with revenues derived from taxes, with the mechanism of government, with rulers and subjects.

XXIII.

THE TRUCE.

AFTER the death of Elizabeth and the accession of James, the English king held out hopes and then made large promises to the Dutch that he would join with them and the French king in freeing the Netherlands and in effectually ruining the house of Austria. But it may be doubted whether James, who, except in his persistent admiration of his own abilities, was the most fickle person who ever reigned, ever seriously intended what he promised. Nor, had he carried out his pledges, would he have prevented what some persons at that time foresaw, that to free the Netherlands from Spain would be (unless the treaty of Ghent, devised and, to a great extent, carried into effect by William the Silent, were carried into effect), that the Spanish provinces of Flanders would be occupied by France. There was nothing which Henry the Fourth of France more ardently desired than the acquisition of the whole of the Netherlands, from the French to the German border. For this he intrigued before and after the truce, and unquestionably had the life of this

king been prolonged Holland would have finished a war with Spain, only to begin another with France. The dream of Henry in 1605, was nearly realized by his grandson in 1672. Up to our own times, French governments have inherited and striven to give effect to the policy of Henry of Navarre, and nearly every great European war has found that the conquest or the defence of the Low Countries was the real object of the combat. It was so in the Thirty Years' War. It was so during the incessant struggle of Louis the Fourteenth's wars, down to the treaty of Utrecht in 1712. In 1793 war was waged again with the same object ; and in 1815, the battle of Waterloo settled the question for a time. The interference of France in the affairs of Belgium in 1830 had the same ultimate object, and had the war of 1870 been followed by French victories it is certain, in my opinion, that the frontier of France would have been extended to the farthest mouth of the Rhine, as well as to the upper and middle stream.

James soon got tired of the promises which he made, promises which he never intended to keep, and could not have kept if he would. He proclaimed himself a pacific monarch, and he set himself at once to make peace with Spain, which was entirely distasteful to his people, and to carry out a matrimonial alliance between his children and the Spanish monarchy, a project to which he adhered during the greater part of his life, to the infinite disgust of all Englishmen. From acts of friendship towards the Spanish Government he soon proceeded to co-operation with them. He did indeed nominally remain in alliance with the States, but he virtually helped

the Spaniards in the last struggles of the war. He was not even deterred by the discovery of the powder plot, which every one at the time believed to be the work of the Spanish Jesuits. The attitude of James towards Holland at the beginning of the seventeenth century led, in the first instance, to that malignant bitterness which marked the relations of Englishmen and Dutchmen during the whole of that century, with occasional interruptions, and even for long after.

It seemed in the summer of 1606 that the conclusion of the War of Independence was as far off as ever. There were the same marches and sieges, the same attempts, to all appearance likely to be successful, to invade Holland, and to invade Flanders; but in reality the war was over. In the first place, the Dutch fleet was crippling the resources of Spain in the extremities of her empire, for it was by the tributes of the East and the West that the war was carried on. Now on sea Spaniard or Portuguese was no match for the Hollander. Besides, Spinola, whose credit on the Genoese exchange had supplied most of the funds needed for the war, since he undertook the command, was unable to meet the obligations which he had created. There was a panic and a crash in Genoa, and a number of merchants were ruined. Spinola could not pay his mercenaries; they mutinied, deserted, and the great general who had proved himself a competent rival of Maurice was rendered powerless on a sudden. Just as the war was coming to an end, some of those considerable persons who had seen its whole course, Justus Lipsius, Hohenlo, and Count John of Nassau, the only surviving brother of William the Silent, passed away.

The negotiations for a truce were first entrusted to the hands of a Brussels tradesman, and a Franciscan friar ; the former soon disappearing, the latter employed during the whole negotiations. The first proposal was that a truce of ten or twelve years should be concluded, on the condition that Holland should relinquish their trade in the Indies. But there seemed to be no authority by which even a truce could be finally guaranteed. In the interval an armistice for eight months from May 4, 1607, was agreed to. It would have been better for the Spaniards if the armistice had been proposed a few months earlier ; for on April 25th of the same year Heemskerk totally destroyed the Spanish fleet in the Bay of Gibraltar, and rendered it still more desirable that peace should be made even at some sacrifice of dignity with these formidable Hollanders. But the ruler of the King of Spain, the Duke of Lerma, was anxious to sacrifice as little dignity as possible.

It would weary my readers to give them even a slight sketch of the shifty and tortuous process by which the truce was negotiated, of how the conferences were broken off and resumed, till the armistice came to an end, and was renewed for short periods, while ambassadors and Dutch statesmen were squabbling at the Hague. For there were three points on which Spain was obstinate. It was insisted by the ancient rulers of Holland, and for forty years her baffled enemies, that the United Provinces should tolerate the open exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, that they should renounce their East India trade, and that they should allow themselves to be described as the

subjects of Spain. To these three proposals they gave a most steady and resolute refusal, and to this refusal they adhered. But in this refusal they were not supported by the two Powers who had hitherto been considered their friends—the Kings of England and France. Both wished to get the India trade into their own hands, and both knew very well that Spain could not retain it. Besides, the Spanish Court was trying to bribe both Henry and James with the offer of the reversion of the Netherlands as a marriage portion with the Spanish infanta, to become a certainty after the death of the childless Archduke. But the first thing to which the Court of Spain yielded was the acknowledgment of independence, though even this under the condition that the other two provisoes should be accepted. When at last the treaty was negotiated in 1609, all mention of India was dropped, and no mention was made of toleration for Catholic worship. But a truce of twelve years was substituted for peace. The treaty was signed on April 9th. No doubt the King of Spain and his advisers had satisfied themselves that the acknowledgment of independence was an empty form, that no faith need be kept with heretics, and would not be kept as soon as it was possible or convenient to break it.

It may seem strange to us, that the Dutch Republic should have refused so obstinately to admit the principle of religious liberty or even of toleration. But, in the first place, it was outrageous for this to be forced on them by a foreign government, which had already declared them free, and was itself the most intolerant government in existence. In negotiations

between two independent states, it is sheer impertinence for one of the parties to claim that the other should do that which is a matter of internal action, however wise and good the policy might be. If at the time when Great Britain and the States of the American Union were negotiating the terms on which the Independence of the Union should be recognized, the Government of Great Britain had insisted that the treaty should contain a clause by which the United States should bind themselves to keep the ten commandments, the other parties to the treaty might have justly resented even so harmless a proposal. For there can be no independence as long as one of the contracting parties insists on a concession in a matter of domestic government.

And the question was not so simple as it seems to us, who have been familiar with toleration, or, what is better, religious equality. At that time, as we shall soon have occasion to see, religious opinion was the stimulus to political action. The immediate toleration of the old creed would have been the concession of a right that Dutch citizens should be allowed to conspire with a foreign enemy against the independence and honour of the state, to be in league with the enemy against whom the Dutch had done battle for forty years, who did not mean to relinquish in one particular the sovereignty which he claimed over them, and would probably, if his resources were equal to his designs, seek at the end of the time to subdue them. "Was it to be conceded," they argued, "for a moment, that we should consent to foster political enemies, who would always conspire, and if they

grew strong enough, would certainly rebel against the liberty which we have spent so much to achieve. If the Roman Catholics, in Holland, suffer some loss of religious freedom, if they are constrained to perform their devotions in private, they may thank the bad faith of Spain for the disabilities under which they labour. If a king or government thinks proper to allege that it will be bound by no promises and no pledges, it must not wonder that another government is distrustful of its secret emissaries, and watches them suspiciously."

Besides, they might argue with justice, "a considerable part of the northern provinces of Holland is inhabited by a Roman Catholic population. These persons have been tolerated and treated kindly. We have no Inquisition which is to search them out and extinguish their tenets in their blood. Under our domestic regulations these persons give us little trouble, though sometimes we have been anxious about their attitude. But if we are to be told by a foreign Power that we are to let these people do what they choose in our state, as well as in churches set apart for them, we cannot answer for the consequences. The mass of our people belong to the Reformed Church, and have followed the model of the great saint and doctor, Calvin of Geneva. We cannot answer for their patience if they see that the rites of that religion which has striven to enslave us for forty years, are to be paraded and flaunted in our midst. However generously we may be disposed towards the Roman Catholics, we are bound to do our best to prevent the peace being broken among us. And if

under the constitution which we have won for them, these persons prove quiet and peaceful, it is most probable that we shall do, of our own accord hereafter, what no human power should or shall force us to do."

"There is yet something else to be said. We may be able to trust Dutchmen, however we may think that they err in matters of religious belief. They are our own people, and will not lightly commit treason against us. But the case is wholly different with the Jesuits and Friars. Yield to the King of Spain and the Archdukes on this point, and our country will be at once infested with these vermin, the common enemies of mankind, with whom honest men can no more have truce than with a wolf. We will have nothing to do with them. We have good reason to believe that they are false even to those who permit or protect them. To us, who openly declare our distrust or detestation of them, they are entirely inadmissible."

Dutchmen who were familiar with matters of public business and the state of the country reasoned in this fashion, and were soon able to illustrate their reasonings by the example which the dagger of Ravaillac supplied. There was only one thing which Henry of France and James of England refused them. This was the formal recognition of their independence. All they could do was to guarantee them the truce. But the foolish King of England and the shrewd King of France were both gaping after the prize which Spain was dangling before their eyes, a royal marriage with the dower of the Low Countries. They were destined to be gulled. But I am pretty sure that if Henry had lived he would have anticipated the policy of his grandson.

When the peace or truce was signed, the King of Spain sent a message, hoping that the Dutch would treat their Catholic fellow subjects with kindness, and the French king's ambassador pleaded forcibly on the same side in forcible language. But of these personages, one had striven to exterminate by torture and fire every opinion which differed from his own, the other had been in the counsels of that party which had striven not only to keep the King of France from his hereditary rights, but had been privy to St. Bartholomew, and deep in the counsels of the League, the object of which was to exterminate the Huguenots. The devil was preaching righteousness, a gang of inquisitors, charity and forbearance. On the other hand, James of England was earnest in advocating the exclusion of all popish opinion. He had no love for Jesuits and priests, however much he might wish to ally himself with the prince who made his court their headquarters. He was still sniffing at the gunpowder which they put into St. Stephen's crypt. Before long he was to take part in the Gomarist and Arminian controversy, to endorse the extremest views of predestination, and before his reign was ended, to drive the professors of this creed over the Atlantic to New England.

XXIV.

THE BANK OF AMSTERDAM.

DURING the century which intervened between the truce of 1609 and the treaty of Utrecht, the Dutch occupied the most conspicuous place in Europe. They were courted by rival powers, and during the devastating wars of the seventeenth century, were for a long time, the centre of European commerce and European finance. Their principal city, Amsterdam, was deemed to be the largest and by far the most opulent in Europe, far surpassing those splendid cities of the Middle Ages, Florence, Genoa, and Venice. The business of Europe was transacted on the Amsterdam Exchange, and the warehouses of this town, built on piles driven into the swampy soil, were stored with the products of the world. In their cities the Dutch were carrying on those manufactures of the finest fabrics for which Flanders and Italy had once been famous, and piling up the spices of the Indies, of which for a time they possessed the monopoly. The wealth and the trade of the Dutch East India Company was more fruitful than the treasures which

LUTHERAN CHURCH AT AMSTERDAM.

the kings of Spain had extorted from their conquests. It was the principal trading, the principal manufacturing country in the world.

It was also the country in which improved agriculture was most thoroughly developed. The Dutch had not, indeed, land enough to grow grain for the maintenance of the densely peopled republic, and they had to save and keep by incessant watchfulness much of the soil of their country from the ever-present danger of the sea. But as soon as ever the armistice began, and the people had rest from war, they began to pump out the waters of the Beemster Lake, and soon recovered no less than eighteen thousand acres of rich meadow land from what had been a vast expanse of shallow water. Their cattle were the finest in Europe, and the produce of their dairies found a ready market in foreign countries. On the land which they had conquered from the foreign enemy and the sea, they laboured with the diligence and the success of market gardeners. They supplied all Europe with the means of gratifying the fashion which they set of ornamental and domestic horticulture. For a long time they exported all the best garden produce to their neighbours. In course of time they extended the cultivation of winter roots from the garden to the field, and gradually taught European nations how to preserve cattle in sound condition through the winter, and to banish scurvy and leprosy by the constant supply of wholesome fresh diet. The cultivation of the turnip and potato, with other products of the same character, has rendered it possible that three times as many persons could

live in security on the same area of land, as were maintained with great risks of famine before these capital discoveries were made. It is difficult for us to realize what were the scourges which afflicted the world, before the Dutch found out winter roots, and brought them to comparative excellence. It was nearly a century before English farmers began generally to copy the Dutch model. It was more than a century before their familiar practices were adopted in the agricultural economy of other nations. It is impossible to overrate the benefits which Dutch enterprise and the spread of Dutch discoveries had on the health of the world.

BRIDGE, AT AMSTERDAM.

When they had carried the cultivation of winter roots to this pitch of excellence, as well as taught ornamental gardening, they betook themselves to the discovery and improvement of what are called the artificial grasses, which, by supplying more abundant fodder to animals, and much more as well as more nutritious hay, again rendered it possible to increase stock upon land. The Dutch discovered the use of clover, red and white saintfoin, lucerne, and either naturalized them or improved them. The English writers on husbandry are constantly calling the attention of English farmers to the marvellous progress which the Dutch were making in these

REMBRANDT.

directions, and commenting on the folly and slothfulness which forebore to imitate them. The population of England was more than doubled in the seventeenth century, by adopting the agricultural inventions of the Dutch. The extension of their discoveries in the eighteenth century again doubled the population.

But keen as the Dutch were after the profits to be obtained by trade, by manufactures and husbandry, diligent as they were in working out any expedient which might add to the material resources of their country, and the citizens who governed the republic, they were as distinguished in the pursuits of literature and science. Holland was the printing house of Europe, for I believe more books were issued by Dutch publishers in the seventeenth century than by all the rest of Europe put together. Holland supplied the world with the most accomplished jurists, the most painstaking historians, the most skilful physicians, and the most original thinkers in science. There was a prosperous and prolific school of painters in Holland, a most skilful school of engravers, before a single Englishman had attempted either art. The University of Leyden was far more renowned in the seventeenth century than Oxford, Cambridge, or Paris were, and students from all countries crowded into this, the youngest of the great universities. Holland was the origin of modern international law and of modern physic. It was the country from which the best mathematical instruments, the best astronomical instruments, the best nautical instruments could be procured. It discovered

the art of cutting and polishing diamonds, and for centuries Amsterdam possessed a monopoly of this art, if indeed it has lost it yet. There was no department of learning or skill in which the Dutch did not excel. It is said that the genius of Milton did not disdain to levy contributions on the poems of the Dutch poet Vondel, and to adopt or imitate some of his happiest verses.

It is necessary to state how rapid was the progress of the Dutch as soon as ever their independence was assured. But perhaps the most remarkable of their undertakings was the foundation of the Bank of Amsterdam, the most famous, and for nearly two centuries, the most envied institution which Holland contained. In the days when paper currencies were unknown, and would not have been trusted had they been known, and the most honest governments levied considerable charges on the mintage of the national currency, the more widely the trade of the country extended, the fuller are great mercantile centres of money. It was the object of traders who might have to liquidate the balance of their trade in money to get possession of such currencies as could be paid away with the least loss. Now it is plain that if, say, English gold and silver were exported, the exporter would have to pay the mint charges, for as soon as the money got out of the country, it would be worth no more than the metal which it contained was worth. Any one who may happen to read the books which bill-brokers and dealers used a couple of centuries or more ago, will be surprised to see how many coins in gold and silver, some foreign, some

English, still circulated in England, not a few of them centuries old, which a bullion dealer or broker might reasonably expect to be offered him. Now if such a state of things existed in England, there was sure to be a similar set of phenomena in Amsterdam, which I have said was the principal exchange of the world.

Far back in the Middle Ages, Venice had established a bank, which should receive the coins of all nations, and give warrants to those persons who deposited such coins, which warrants should circulate from hand to hand, just as bank notes do now. Three centuries after the Bank of Venice was founded, a similar institution was established at Genoa, on a somewhat similar basis. In 1609, the year of the truce, the Bank of Amsterdam was founded, and before the end of the century was known to have metallic deposits with it to the amount of $180,000,000, a treasure more prodigious than any European financier at that time thought could be possibly accumulated. The notes issued by the Bank were supposed to be, and in theory were exactly equal in amount to the specie or metallic money deposited in the strong room of the Bank. But the notes of the Bank always bore a premium, due to the convenience of the absolutely guarded security which the holder of the note possessed. Then the Bank charged a small sum on every account which was opened with it, a small sum for negotiating bills and transferring balances, besides the profit which they derived from their own subscribed capital and their customers' money at call.

The Bank was under the management of the Amsterdam corporation, the chiefs of which examined the treasure annually and made oath that it was of the full amount at which the managers of the Bank affirmed it to be. It was seen that the well-being of this great commercial centre was so much the interest of the Amsterdam municipality, that they could be more safely trusted with the control of the institution than any State official could be. When nearly a century afterwards, the project of starting a great central Bank in England was entertained, it was thought for a long time that the system under which the Bank of Amsterdam was managed should be the model of a Bank to be established in London. In the end, and fortunately so, other counsels prevailed, for in the seventeenth century London had not been so completely educated in the principles of commercial honour as to make the Amsterdam experiment a safe or convenient model for English practice. It is remarkable that not a few of the first directors of the Bank of England were Flemish settlers in London, who, driven out for their religion, brought over with them the intelligence, sagacity, and integrity of Netherland finance.

The reputation of the Bank of Amsterdam received a remarkable confirmation in 1672. In this year Louis XIV., having secured by heavy bribes the complicity and assistance of Charles II. of England, declared sudden war on the Dutch. It was perhaps the most infamous war ever waged, the most unprovoked, and the most unexpected. The King of France was at this time at the height of his

power. The King of England had been in what was supposed to be firm alliance with Holland, whose Stadtholder, afterwards William III. of England, was his nephew. The administration of Holland was in the hands of the brothers De Witt, who were supposed to have been wilfully negligent of affairs when the war broke out. The Dutch were panic-struck at the calamity which came on them, and the political enemies of the De Witts goaded the populace on into murdering the two statesmen, a crime to which it is to be feared William was privy, and by which he certainly profited. The Dutch saved themselves from permanent ruin by a prodigious self-inflicted calamity. They cut the dykes, laid the country under water, and baffled the invader. They punished Charles or rather his people for the king's perfidy. Now, in this crisis there was a run on the Bank of Amsterdam. But the city magistrate took the alarmed depositors into the treasury of the Bank, and showed them its store untouched. Among the pieces of money which lay there were masses of coin which had been scorched and half melted in the great fire which many years before had occurred in the Stadthouse. The panic was allayed, the merchants were satisfied, and the reputation of the Bank became higher than ever.

But when the French overran Holland in the early days of the great Continental war, all the treasure was gone. The government of Amsterdam had lent it, despite the fundamental principle of the Bank, to the Dutch East India Company, as was rumoured.

XXV.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS, AND THE MURDER OF BARNEVELDT.

THE Dutch had waged war for forty years in defence of their political and religious liberties. They refused to allow themselves to be taxed without their own consent, or to submit to being persecuted into a religion which they did not choose to accept. But it is unfortunately the case, that men who suffer much for their own liberty of conscience, constantly refuse to concede to others what they themselves have contended for. This was particularly the case in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The followers of Calvin hated and persecuted the followers of Luther, and often more heartily and more cruelly than they did their old enemies of the Roman Church. The Puritans of Massachusetts, in the early days of their history, treated the sectaries among themselves as harshly as they had been treated before they fled from their persecutors. The fact is, these people not only thought that they were entirely in the right, but they were convinced that every one who differed from

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them in doctrine or discipline must infallibly be in the wrong. Then by a process which they borrowed from the laws which regulate civil life, they considered that those who dissented from or even doubted their opinions were traitors, who must needs, in the interests of public duty and public safety, be severely punished. So, in England, the Episcopal party persecuted the Presbyterian party. In time the latter got the upper hand, and persecuted their old foes. In due course, the Episcopalians again got hold of the government and avenged themselves on the Dissenters. Now Holland had to go through fifteen years of this kind of shameful struggle, during which theological bitterness dishonoured the Republic.

The enemies of Holland, when they granted the truce, counted upon the likelihood that political and religious faction would so tear to pieces the country which had fought so gallantly for victory that in a short time they would, from sheer weariness at anarchy, welcome back their old lords, and they who were greedy after the inheritance, or at least wanted to appropriate the commerce and wealth of Holland, were not disinclined to foment these differences. For the Kings of France never lost sight of what they hoped to make prize of, and the Kings of England were always ready to encourage the mercantile classes in England in their envy and grudge at the rich Republic. So they stirred up strife between the house of Orange and the chiefs of the Dutch Commonwealth, and were not above meddling in the religious dissensions which now cropped up. James of England had a great opinion of his theological learning, and entered with

alacrity into a controversy in which he was quite convinced that he was superior to all of his age.

The Constitution of the United Netherlands was not a satisfactory one. To use an American expression, which exactly represents the situation, it was one in which the doctrine of State rights was carried to a length which threatened to dissolve the union into fragments. The several States had each their ancient charters and privileges. They had united in order to assure these several rights by joint action. Even in the face of the enemy difficulties arose, but when peace came the difficulties were multiplied. In order that the central government, such as it was, should have authority, every State must give its assent, and in an important crisis, one of the little States would be very reluctant to give its assent; and so common action was paralyzed. Had the Dutch States done as the American States did in the early days of the American Union, they would never have suffered from the conspiracy which at last succeeded in changing the republic into a monarchy.

Now Maurice was a considerable soldier and no contemptible diplomatist. But he was ambitious and avaricious. He would never have refused the sovereignty which had been offered his father, and which, as he thought, was his hereditary right, because it had been proffered to his father and had been declined by him. He was constantly urged from without to assume a hereditary position. But he hesitated to do this against the will of the States, and preferred to see whether he could not so weaken the opposition to him, as to insure him practically the authority which

THE BINNENHOF AT THE HAGUE.

he coveted. Now undoubtedly the chief opponents of Maurice in his theory of administration were Barneveldt, Grotius, and, speaking generally, the leading men in the States-General. The strength of the Orange party was in the populace. The leader of what we may call the aristocratic party was Barneveldt. He had been of infinite service to his country, of infinite service to Maurice, for he had protected, educated, and counselled him. But Maurice was embittered against him, and was planning how he might supersede and destroy him. The death of Barneveldt on the scaffold of the Binnenhof was a judical murder of the very worst kind, contrived and carried out by Maurice, against his own benefactor and the benefactor of his country.

The pretext in the first instance was a religious feud. The Dutch had adopted the Calvinist model of the Reformed faith, and had accepted in its crudest form the doctrine of predestination. But there arose a revolt against this doctrine in the University of Leyden; for universities in the Old World have always been the nurseries of theological novelties, or, as the adherents of the old tenets call them, heresies. Now in 1602, a certain Jacob Arminius had been recommended to one of the theology chairs in the University of Leyden, and though at first his admission was opposed by the other theology professor, Gomarus, the latter yielded, and even advocated his admission. But in a very short time the teaching of Arminius again roused the suspicion of Gomarus, and the controversy began, and soon passed from the university into the parish pulpits, where it rapidly became embittered, and was soon identified with political rancour.

Arminius died in 1609, but the tenets which he held, or was reputed to hold, and the school which he founded, survived him. These sectaries got the name of Remonstrants, their opponents that of contra-Remonstrants; and the latter having got the upper hand, partly by the assistance which James of England gave them, and partly by the activity of the clergy, who stirred up the people against the Remonstrants, proceeded to persecute their opponents, driving them out of the churches and banishing them from the country. But the doctrine spread; the English king, who urged that the new heresy should be extirpated at the stake, himself inclined to it in the latter years of his reign, and the struggle between the episcopal clergy and the Puritans in England, which was one of the two causes of the great civil war, and the Commonwealth of 1649, was embittered by the fact that the school of Laud had embraced the hated doctrine of Arminius. But after the Restoration in England, this school revived, and finally developed into those tenets which were called Latitudinarian and sometimes Unitarian.

It is always distasteful to an historian to linger on the floor of theological controversy, but in the history of the human race, or of any part of it, it is impossible to interpret or comprehend the course of events, unless one takes into account all those forces which influence society. Now, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Luther threw down the gauntlet to Rome, to the middle of the seventeenth, when both parties, entirely exhausted, agreed to a peace in the treaty of Westphalia, there was not a single public question which had not a theological side to it. If

men fought for political freedom, they encouraged themselves in the struggle with religious motives, and strove to sanctify their claims to secular rights, by insisting that these rights were derived from the rightful interpretation of the Bible. From the beginning the Reformation divided itself into two streams. Luther guided the one from Saxony, Calvin the other from Geneva. But the former invested the King with the powers which he took away from the Pope, and the tenet of the Divine right of kings, and with it the other right which a king claimed of dictating what the subject's religion should be, became almost a religious dogma. Public liberty therefore made but little progress in those countries which adopted the Lutheran confession, and the tenets of Augsburg have been embraced by only a small, and that the northern section of the Teutonic race. But the other, a different, and rapidly a hostile creed, early enlisted itself on the side of political liberty and resistance to arbitrary power. Calvinism was the creed of the French Huguenots, of the Swiss Protestants, of the Dutch patriots, of the Scottish people, of the English Puritans, and of the settlers in New England. These races are the pioneers of political liberty. They studied the Old Testament carefully, and found it very invigorating. And in Holland, believing that they owed much, aye, everything, to predestination, they looked upon any who disputed this cardinal doctrine as leagued with the foes of their liberty, or ready to league with them. Nor, as time went on, did this conviction diminish, for it was soon seen that the disciples of Arminius ranged themselves on the side of absolutism.

The municipal party at Amsterdam and other large Dutch towns, without committing themselves to the new doctrines, were sincerely desirous of peace. It was certain to increase the difficulties of government if, after they had rest on their borders, they should have strife in every town, almost in every family. Hence the States of Holland issued an ordinance, under the title a "Resolution for the Peace of the Church," which was drawn up by Grotius and intended to strike a balance between the disputants, and sought to silence some of the most furious partisans, and invited Maurice to support the decision of the civil government by his authority. Now Maurice, it is known, had long determined to make his power larger and more permanent; he saw that the party which Barneveldt led or influenced was the great obstacle to his achieving his designs, and there seems no doubt that in 1616 he had indeed to effect his success, by getting rid of his rival. In this year, by a great stroke of diplomacy, Barneveldt induced the English king, to whom the Dutch were admitted to be still in debt to the amount of £600,000, to accept a present payment of £250,000, and to surrender the three cautionary towns, Brill, Flushing, and Rammekens, which had been held as security for the English debt since the days of Elizabeth, to the Dutch Government. James was ridiculed all over Europe for his improvident bargain, and returned the contempt which he encountered by hatred towards the Dutch statesman.

The next step taken was the creation of a small body of troops under the control or in the pay of the municipal authorities, who should repress the out-

rages which these furious partisans were constantly committing. This gave Maurice the opportunity which he desired. He argued that this measure of precaution was a revolt against the authority which had been entrusted to him as commander-in-chief of the Dutch forces, and therefore responsible for the peace. Acting on his own authority, and making an entirely new departure in what had been the customary and constitutional procedure of the States, he remodelled the municipalities, disbanded the guards which the municipalities had elected, openly joined the party of violence, and arrested Barneveldt, Grotius, and others. As Maurice had remodelled the representatives of the States-General, he was able to make it appear that the arrest and the trial of the aged statesman was the act of legal and constituted authorities. Maurice, after establishing his partisans in all the Dutch towns, summoned a synod at Dort, or Dordrecht, in order to secure the countenance of religion for the purposes which he meditated. The synod had 180 sittings, cost the State a million guilders, and set forth a confession of faith, which was long held by the Calvinistic party as of supreme authority.

Meanwhile, Barneveldt was in prison, and subjected to many affronts and injuries. The Court which tried him was an illegal one, and the illustrious prisoner was treated with the greatest unfairness by his judges. One of those who was impeached with him was so terrified by the threat of torture, that he committed suicide in prison.

Barneveldt was found guilty and sentenced to death.

The charges against him were frivolous, had they been true, and were mostly false. But Maurice and his associates were resolved on the judicial murder of the great statesman, though they pretended that had Barneveldt acknowledged his guilt they would have commuted his sentence. He was beheaded in the square of the Binnenhof at the Hague on May 13, 1619. In all the history of political faction, sullied as it has been by a thousand crimes, none is more infamous than the murder of this great man. If justice were done to his memory, his statue should be erected on the spot where he was so shamefully executed. Sixty-three years afterwards, two other great Dutch statesmen were murdered by an infuriated rabble, instigated by the interests, perhaps with the connivance, of the same family which, after having, in the person of William the Silent, done so much for Holland, did, in the person of his descendants, ultimately effect its ruin.

Barneveldt was the only victim of this counter revolution. The frightened suicide was hanged on a gallows, and the others who had been condemned on the charge for which Barneveldt suffered were finally sentenced to imprisonment for life. It is probable that Maurice did not like to encounter the universal reprobation which all Europe would have uttered had he shed the blood of Grotius, who was not only renowned for his bravery, but had employed his pen effectively on behalf of his country's commercial liberties. Grotius continued his literary labours in prison, and after two years, by means of an ingenious stratagem devised and carried out by his wife, he

GROTIUS.

succeeded in escaping, packed up in a chest which purported to contain books on the Arminian side of the controversy. Grotius got safely to Antwerp and thence to Paris. He attempted to return to and reside in Rotterdam in 1631, but the States were implacable and he left for Hamburg, and afterwards went to Sweden. He died in 1645.

XXVI.

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR, AND THE RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES.

THE twelve years' truce expired in August, 1621, and hostilities recommenced. There was, however, another war of far greater significance going on, to which the Dutch war was only an episode. No war ever waged had more lasting results than the so-called Thirty Years' War, which began with the revolt of Bohemia, and was concluded by what is variously called the Treaty of Westphalia and the Peace of Munster. The Treaty of Westphalia was held to have established the balance of power in Europe, and was always appealed to afterwards when war took place and disputes were settled.

Wars, as the Greek philosopher said, are set in motion by trivial causes, but owe their existence to great causes. The trivial causes of the Thirty Years' War were the succession to the duchies of Cleves and Juliers, and the revolt of Bohemia from the Austrian succession. The real or great causes were, the hostility of Catholic and Protestant, the determination of

the Emperor to make himself the real master of Germany, and the determination of the French Government so to weaken the German Empire that Flanders and the frontier of the Rhine might eventually fall into its hands. This has been the policy of France for centuries, and it was its policy in 1870. In 1610 just before he was assassinated, Henry IV. of France had resolved to humiliate the house of Austria. His son's minister never forgot that object.

The mad Duke of Cleves and Juliers, a district situated on the border of Holland, died in 1609, and the succession fell to two of his nieces, the Countesses of Brandenburg and Neuburg. The Dutch interfered to prevent the duchies from being confiscated by the Emperor, and put the two countesses in possession as tenants in common. But from interested motives the latter of these in 1614 became a Roman Catholic, and hoped to enlist the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria, who afterwards got possession of the Palatinate on her side. Shortly afterwards the Evangelical Union and the Catholic League came to blows over the election of the head of the former association to the crown of Bohemia, on the death of the Emperor Matthias. It was the old story, the determination of the Catholics to root out the Protestants, and of the Protestants to defend themselves.

The Dutch were unwilling to break the truce, and the Lutheran princes were indisposed to assist the Elector Palatine. But the Catholic princes were active enough. The Elector was stripped of his hereditary dominions, and very speedily, at the battle of the White Mountain, was constrained to relinquish Bo-

hemia. But I am only indirectly concerned with the horrible Thirty Years' War, which was continued for interested motives, and threw Germany back for two centuries. In 1621, the twelve years' truce being expired, the King of Spain and the Archdukes offered to renew it, on the condition that the States would acknowledge their ancient sovereigns, one of whom, the Archduke Albert, died this year. Even if the States had been inclined to negotiate, the will of Maurice was in the ascendant, and the war was renewed. The Dutch, it is true, were now entirely insulated. James of England was making overtures to Spain, and being cajoled. France, who had wished to save Barneveldt, was unfriendly in consequence of the manner in which her intercession had been treated. The Dutch party which was opposed to Maurice was exasperated, and the great counsellor was no more there to advise his country in its emergencies. The safety of Holland lay in the fact that the wars of religion were being waged on a wider and more distant field, for a larger stake, and with larger armies. Not content with murdering Barneveldt, Maurice took care to ruin his family. But at last, and just before his death in 1625, Maurice, in the bitterness of disappointment, said, "As long as the old rascal was alive, we had counsels and money ; now we can find neither one nor the other." Maurice had irreconcilably injured those who alone could supply him with both. The memory of Barneveldt was avenged, even though his reputation has not been rehabilitated.

Frederic Henry, half-brother of Maurice, was at once made Captain and Admiral-General of the

States, and soon after Stadtholder. In military capacity, Frederic was reputed to be his brother's equal, and in all that was required for civil administration to be his superior. The new Stadtholder was much more disposed to subordinate his ambition to the constitution than his predecessor was, and apart from the fact that he rather inclined to the Arminian or Remonstrant party, he was not the man who would lend the powers of government to a theological wrangle. Besides, in a free constitution, it is a difficult thing to perpetuate a polemical war. Unless an attempt is made to identify a religious opinion with a political one, as, for example, happened for a century and a half in Scotland, the fires of controversy are soon exhausted. In Holland the two sects were equally devoted to the good of their country, equally resolute in defending it against the common foe, equally resolved to maintain the liberties which they had won after a forty years' war. The house of Orange, too, in the person of its existing head, was counselling moderation, and very speedily the controversy which had threatened to tear Holland asunder was silenced by mutual consent, except in synods and presbyteries. In a few years, Holland became, as far as the government was concerned, the most tolerant country in the world, the asylum of those whom bigotry hunted from their native land. Hence it became the favourite abode of those wealthy and enterprising Jews, who greatly increased its wealth by aiding its external and internal commerce.

The military activity of Frederic Henry was assisted by the growing weakness of Spain, and by the diversion

FREDERIC, PRINCE OF ORANGE.

of the wars of religion into a wider field. But it was especially on sea that the Hollanders were triumphant. In 1628 they captured the entire silver fleet of the Spaniards, on the punctual arrival of which all Spanish finance depended, and in the next year, almost annihilated the pirates of Dunkirk. And though the differences between England and the States on the one hand, and France on the other, led the Spanish party to offer another truce, the Dutch were disinclined to forego the advantages which, in their opinion, they were obtaining and consolidating by the continuance of hostilities, for every year made the Dutch East India Company more powerful, its trade more lucrative, and its influence more secure.

It was not, however, in the Eastern seas only that the maritime power of the Dutch was conspicuous. They began to attack Spain and Portugal in the New World, and to establish forts and factories on the eastern coast of North and South America, from the Hudson to the La Plata rivers. The Dutch West India Company was as energetic and successful as the East India, though its trade was not so important and its conquests not so durable. Meanwhile the military abilities, the constitutional policy, and the generally wise administration of the Stadtholder, induced the States, in a fit of unthinking gratitude, to make the office which he held hereditary, for they gave the reversion or succession of his office to his son William, then only five years old. This was the beginning of that discord between the States and their chief magistrate, which, more than anything else caused the downfall of Holland.

The victories of Gustavus Adolphus materially strengthened the Dutch, and enabled them not only to protect their own frontier, but to enlarge it at the expense of the Archduchess, who died in 1633, when the Netherlands reverted to the Spanish monarchy. Under these circumstances, the States entered into still closer relations with France. Richelieu, the minister of the French king, wished to continue the war with the double object of weakening the house of Austria in Germany, and after expelling the Spanish from the Netherlands, of securing a paramount influence in that part of the Low Countries. Hence, though reluctantly, the States agreed to make no peace or truce except in concert with France; and stipulated for the partition of the Spanish Netherlands whenever the conquest was effected, unless these provinces should achieve their own independence, when the States and France were to protect them. It is probable that the Dutch foresaw that this compact, so dangerous to them, would never be carried out. It is certain that it rather hindered than promoted the accord between France and Holland.

It was in the year 1637, that the extraordinary mania for speculating in tulip roots, took possession of the Dutch. Millions of guilders were staked on these roots, and large fortunes were made and lost in the traffic. It is, of course, nothing strange in the history of commerce that wild speculations, which, in ordinary times would have had no chance of existence, have overturned the reason and bewildered the judgment of the most sober traders. The Eng-

lish had their South Sea Bubble; the French their Mississippi Scheme. But the curious thing in the Dutch tulip mania is that it sprang out of that passion for horticulture in which the Dutch were pre-eminent, and from which they conferred lasting benefits on civilization, and that it occurred at a time when Holland was engaged in a peculiarly costly war, when the country was under the delusion that public wealth could be secured by foreign conquests, and when, though some men grew rich, the general burden of taxation was almost intolerable. If one searches through history, one can never find a single case in which public opulence can be traced to foreign conquest, in which the cost to the public of occupying and maintaining such conquests has not been greatly in excess of all the profit which private interests have secured from them. This is clearly discernible in the conquests of Spain, France, and even England. The trading companies of the Dutch effected the financial ruin of Holland.

In 1639, another Spanish fleet was annihilated by Tromp in a naval battle off the English Downs. The place of combat was off the English coast, and Charles would have resented it, if he could, or if the relations in which he stood to his people had permitted it. After this victory the States assumed the title of High Mightinesses, or high and mighty lords. This apparent departure from Republican simplicity was, in the opinion of the States, essential, in order that they might take their proper place among European Powers. Perhaps in no time has the assumption or bestowal of pompous titles been more

ADMIRAL TROMP.

conspicuous or ludicrous than at present, when the princes of half-savage states are decorated with the titles of Majesty. But in the seventeenth century these absurd distinctions had a meaning, as the Dutch discerned at the time when they were negotiating the truce of 1609.

In 1641, the son of the Stadtholder was married to the eldest daughter of Charles I., the first occasion on which any of the house of Orange had formed an alliance with the reigning families of Europe. The English king was reconciled to the marriage, because he thought that he would be able to secure a powerful ally against the Scotch malcontents, who were at that time the only open enemies of the Government. This marriage was the beginning of great misfortunes to the Dutch, and Holland eventually suffered nearly as seriously by matrimonial alliances with the Stewart and Hanoverian kings, as the old Netherlands had by the marriages of the houses of Burgundy and Austria. In the same year, Spain was further enfeebled by the revolt of Portugal, under John of Braganza, and the reconciliation of Holland with the rulers of that part of the Empire of Philip II. Spain could not, since Portugal reclaimed its possessions in the East Indies, pretend to exclude Holland from what was no longer, under any colour, theirs.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to deal with the last events of the long war which came to an end with the peace of Munster. In this peace, the negotiations of which were exceedingly protracted, owing to the difficulty of reconciling the claims of conquest with the claims of original authority.

Holland gained all which it had demanded in 1609. The Spanish Government absolutely relinquished all claims and titles, and acknowledged the complete independence of the Dutch. They were allowed to remain the lords of all which they had acquired during the course of their protracted wars. The Scheldt was to be closed by the Dutch, and Antwerp to be ruined as a commercial city. Peace was proclaimed on June 5, 1648, the day on which Horn and Egmont had been executed eighty years before. The Stadtholder had died on March 14, 1647, and his son William had succeeded him.

XXVII.

COLLISIONS BETWEEN ENGLAND AND HOLLAND.

THE rivalry of the English and Dutch East India Companies, and the consequent collision of trade interests in the two countries, was early apparent. In order to obviate them, a treaty was drawn up between the two countries, by which the commerce of the companies was to be regulated. But at so great a distance, and with so slight a control over these powerful associations which the respective governments of England and Holland had created, conventions on paper were not likely to be of much validity. In 1624 came the news of what is called the massacre of Amboyna, an event of which the most discordant accounts were given by the rival companies. At this time it is impossible to extricate the truth from the mists of passion in which the transaction is involved. It is sufficient to say that the affair was appealed to as a reason for stimulating hatred between the two nations, a hatred which was not only provoked by real or fancied injuries, but constantly renewed by the unfortunate position in

which Holland was placed by its relations to the Stewarts.

The commercial theory of the Dutch, which rested on the principle of a rigid monopoly, which should not only secure a sole market to Dutch traders, but should extinguish the possibility of procuring produce from any place which was not under their control, was certain to excite hostility. It was as monstrous as the grant of Borgia. It pretended to a right that the demands of all civilized nations should be interpreted in the light of Dutch profits, that supply should be curtailed in order that these profits should be enhanced, the only limit to this restraint being the maximum price which their customers could afford to pay. Now the principal produce of the East, for which there was a constant demand, was spice; pepper, cinnamon, mace, nutmegs, cloves. These, in the almost total absence of vegetables and modern condiments were the choicest flavours which men desired some centuries ago, and the Dutch tried to appropriate the whole supply. The English, who were at this time almost the only rivals of the Dutch in the East, for the Portuguese trade was well-nigh ruined, determined that they should not have this monopoly, and during the first half of the seventeenth century, the East India Company in England had been making considerable progress. The treaty of 1619 was a well-meant endeavour to control these tendencies.

The attitude of the Dutch towards the Parliament, Cromwell and the army, was in the last degree ririlating. The king's two sons, Charles and James,

had escaped to Holland, where, indeed, at the commencement of the war, Henrietta, on pretence of bringing her daughter over, had been attempting to obtain supplies. At the Hague, Charles, openly countenanced by his brother in-law, strove to induce the States to declare on the royal side, and to aid the Stewarts in those designs which the War of Independence was entered upon for the purpose of defeating. It was only when the army proceeded to try and to sentence the king that the States yielded, and then only to the extent of mediation. But all their efforts were in vain. The Dutch envoys urged the resentment of Europe, and Cromwell, who knew very well what the resentment of Europe meant, refused to yield. In a few years, the monarchs of Europe vied in flattering the usurper, who had slain one of their order. The Dutch States, however, did not venture on addressing the younger Charles as king of Great Britain, as indeed no crowned head did except the degenerate and licentious queen of Sweden, Christina.

The annoyance felt in the English Parliament at this interference and this sympathy with the exiled family was intensified by the murder of Isaac Dorislaus. Dorislaus was the son of a Dutch clergyman, and in consideration of his learning had been attached to the teaching staff of Cambridge University or Gresham College He had been parliamentary counsel at the king's trial, and most imprudently had been sent as envoy extraordinary to the States, with the object of bringing about a close alliance between the two Republics. The day after his arrival he was

murdered at the Hague by some of the Royalist exiles, who were there in considerable numbers, under the protection of the Stadtholder and the Orange party. The murderers escaped with the connivance of the same faction. This outrage on the law of nations was a greater offence even at that time than the trial and execution of Charles.

The Stadtholder now determined, like his uncle Maurice, to make himself absolute. His plan was to foment dissension between the State of Holland and the other six States, and his occasion, the determination of the former state, which bore the heaviest share of the public expenditure, to reduce the army and curtail official salaries. As this was the diminution of William's income, he was discontented, and the mischievous woman he had married, true to the instincts of her race, urged him to strike for more power. He imprisoned members of the States-General without form of law, because they were, or he thought they were, unfriendly to his schemes, and then attempted to effect by surprise the military occupation of Amsterdam, in which he was foiled, for the Amsterdam burghers, on discovering his plot, threatened to cut the dykes. Fortunately he died at the age of twenty-four, 1650, to the infinite satisfaction of all but the Orange faction. Men gave thank-offerings in gratitude for his opportune death. His widow, a few days after his death, gave birth to a son, afterwards William III. of England.

In this crisis, when there was no representative of William the Silent who could under any pretence take he lead, the fortunes of the Dutch Republic were

managed by the State of Holland. For a time there was to be no Stadtholder, but the supreme authority over the civil and military administration was to reside in the States-General. In the conference which arranged for a time the form of Government, the illegal acts of the late Stadtholder were formally condemned, and the persons whom he had deposed or imprisoned re-admitted to their offices.

After the constitution was settled came the war with the English Parliament, the most mischievous and wanton war ever waged. The causes of it are to be discovered in the insults or affronts put on the English envoys by the partisans of the house of Orange and the Royalist exiles, with the connivance it appears of the Government itself. The action of the mob at the Hague was avenged by the Navigation Act, which inflicted a severe blow on Dutch shipping, the Dutch at this time being the carriers of Europe. But it seems that war might have been averted, and an alliance between the two Republics might have been effected, could the Dutch have been able, perhaps had they been willing, to enforce the banishment of the English exiles, and particularly the royal exiles, from Holland. As it was, the mere proposal to ally themselves in any way with the English Parliament was wholly distasteful to the Orange party. Their partisans insulted the English ambassadors, and made them, with the party which they influenced, entirely hostile to the Dutch.

Still the Dutch war, into which it was said that Cromwell, despite his better judgment, was drawn by Vane and St. John, remains a scandal to the English Parliament. But it is difficult to say how the war was

DE RUYTER.

begun, though it would seem that the English were the aggressors. The contest was entirely on the sea. The Dutch admirals were Tromp, an ardent partisan of the Orange faction, and De Ruyter, while those of the English fleet were Blake and Monk. The struggle was continued with varying success, though the advantage had been on the side of the English. But with a larger trade, and a smaller territory, the Dutch losses were more serious than those of their rivals. It is said that the two years' war with England involved greater losses to the Dutch merchants than the whole of the war with Spain had. But if the Dutch were anxious for peace, the English were not unwilling. After long negotiations, peace was effected in 1654, and on terms which gave lasting offence to the Orange party, for Cromwell bound De Witt to prevent the succession of the young prince to the office of Stadtholder.

The Dutch, in sheltering the English exiles with Charles Stewart at their head, had protected men at their own serious risk, in whom there was neither gratitude nor honour. It seems that there was hardly ever an English sovereign more callous, more selfish, and more immoral than the restored Charles was. His restoration was welcomed in the most genuine and lively manner, on his return from Brussels to Breda, and he was honoured and entertained magnificently. De Witt, who had been, as he alleged, the unwilling instrument of his exile to Brussels, assured him of the attachment of Holland to him, and of their joy at his being replaced on the throne of his ancestors; and Charles, on the other hand, avowed that

for many and enduring reasons, he valued the friendship of the States-General at a higher rate than that of any European Power, or all together. He assured them that he would maintain peace between them and his kingdom inviolate, and that none of his predecessors should equal him in the services he would render to the Republic.

He then recommended to them the interests of his sister and nephew. They met his suggestion by agreeing to take charge of his education, and by voting an allowance for the expenses of his household. They abrogated the Act by which he was excluded from the office of Stadtholder, and determined, it would seem, to gratify Charles in everything, alleged that this conclusion was carried by the importunity of the usurpers, and that now that the English republic was no more, they declared it void, as having ceased with that which gave effect to it. These concessions, perhaps expedient, and certainly warranted by the great services which William afterwards did his country, must have suggested to Charles that the Dutch would hereafter be very submissive to whatever he might please to enjoin on them. The Dutch, I imagine, were still smarting with the memories of what they had lost during the days of the Protector, and were willing to believe that better times were coming for them in the restoration of a prince, whom they had befriended and sheltered to their own serious loss.

But all the while Charles was dissembling with them. He was absolutely selfish, and entirely indifferent to those of his own countrymen who had ruined themselves on his behalf. He was less likely to care for the

interests of those who, not being of his own race, had suffered on his account. And he had a keen memory for any slight or affront. Now in the days of his exile the Dutch had commented freely on his licentious and profligate habits, and even offended him by the contrast which their homely and decorous life was to his own. In the same way, Charles never forgave the Scotch for the discipline under which they put him while he was in Scotland, and when he came to the throne, persecuted and harried the sons of those who had laid down their lives for him at Dunbar and Worcester fights. There were men in the States-General who distrusted him for all his protestations, and one of them, when the Hollanders were voting the funds for defraying his expenses, said in a true spirit of prophecy that the money had better be laid out in cannon and powder, and other munitions of war.

In the year after the Restoration, Mary, the widow of William and mother of the young prince, died, when the boy was ten years old, making, by will, her brother Charles his guardian. The States were greatly alarmed at the risk that Charles might insist on the right thus conferred on him, and bring the boy up at the English court. But Charles had no mind for such liabilities, and though he pressed his nephew's claims in language which was very different from that which he had used at the Hague a year before, he spared the young Prince of Orange the irreparable injury of superintending his education, and of thereby making him totally unfit for all public or private duties whatsoever. In one particular, however, he followed the policy of the Protector whose memory he insulted.

He raked up every charge he could discover or the Commonwealth could discover against the Republic from the affair of Amboyna down to the latest grievance, and insisted that the English merchants should enter upon the monopoly which the Dutch enjoyed.

When he married Catherine of Braganza, he demanded that the Dutch should abstain from maintaining their transatlantic settlements in the dominions or reputed dominions of the King of Portugal, and assured them that he would make his kinsman's cause his own. The Dutch who had maintained, and who thought they could still maintain the possessions of their West India Company, appear to have been so far influenced by these threats as to make a peace with the King of Portugal, under which they resigned Brazil for a large present payment, and for a licence to trade freely at all the Portuguese possessions in the two Indies.

They did everything to conciliate him. They handed over three of the late king's judges who had taken refuge at Amsterdam ; though they knew that they were foredoomed, and showed an alacrity in the gratification of his wishes which must have made him feel no little contempt for them. Ultimately a peace and even an alliance was negotiated, which seemed to promise fairly for permanent friendship between the two peoples. The Dutch were indeed not a little alarmed at the French king insisting that they should ratify and guarantee the sale of Dunkirk, one of Cromwell's conquests, which Charles, to the infinite disgust of his people, had parted with to Louis, in consideration of a

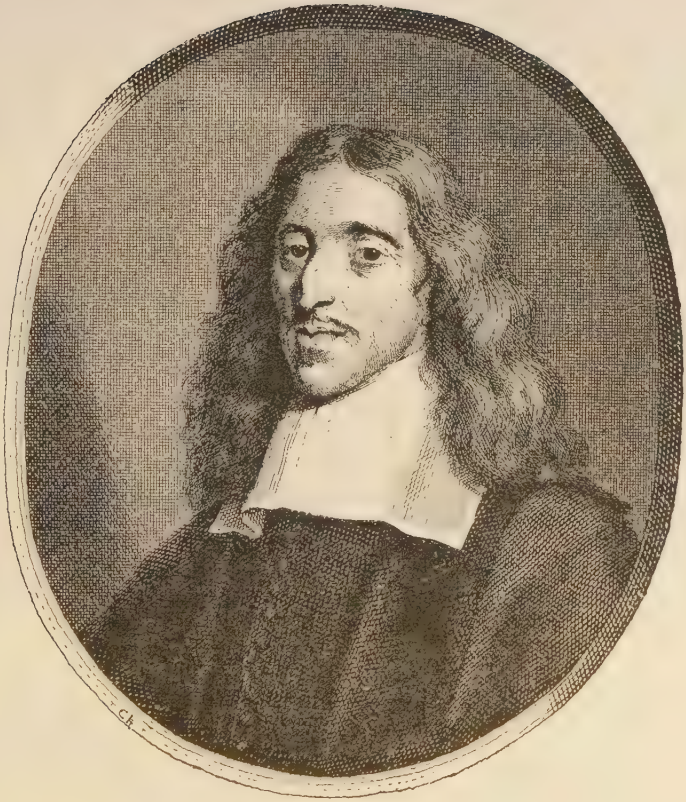
considerable sum of money, which was immediately squandered, as the Prodigal devoured his living, for any acquisition of France in the Netherlands was a matter of anxiety to the Republic. Still they yielded on this point too, and Charles graciously relinquished to them the guardianship and education of the young Prince of Orange, a duty which, fortunately, it was never his intention to undertake. Could he indeed have seen into the future, he would have insisted on this as the most important right which he could substantiate, and the English, who envied and hated Holland, would have gladly acquiesced in educating young William in the interest of themselves and the Stewarts.

XXVIII.

THE ADMINSTRATION OF JOHN DE WITT.

BETWEEN 1650 and 1672, the affairs of Holland were practically managed by John de Witt. This able and accomplished statesman, whose work on "The Interest of Holland" is a very complete summary of the political and mercantile condition of the Republic, was the son of Jacob de Witt, one of the members of the States of Holland, who had, in the last year of the Stadtholderate of William II., been arbitrarily and illegally imprisoned in Loevenstein, and only released on condition that they abdicated their offices. This outrage made a deep impression on the mind of the son, and was the reason why he was and remained hostile to the pretensions of the young prince.

Had it been possible to restrain the Orange party, De Witt would have obviated these occasions of difference and ultimately of wars, which were so disastrous to Holland, during the time of the English Commonwealth. It was he who negotiated the treaty of 1654, and acquiesced in the exclusion of the Prince



JOHN DE WITT.

of Orange from the office of Stadtholder, and the expulsion of the Stewarts from Holland. In all likelihood he was no unwilling agent in deposing the house of Orange, for it is said that his father, old Jacob de Witt, was used, when he met him in the morning, to say, "Remember the prison of Loevenstein." After the war was brought to an end, De Witt, though only twenty-eight years of age, was and remained practically Prime Minister of Holland, under the title of Pensionary.

Still, as we have seen, De Witt was exceedingly complaisant to Charles before his restoration to the English throne, more so when it was finally effected, and even afterwards when Charles showed himself so captious and arrogant with the Dutch envoys. De Witt knew that Holland had now more to lose than gain by any conflict, and saw that if by any means short of a public humiliation he could keep on good terms with France and England, the losses which Holland had sustained could be easily repaired. His countrymen called him "the Wisdom of Holland."

In order to conciliate the Orange party, De Witt induced the prince's grandmother to entrust his education to the States of Holland. The Princess Dowager agreed, and the youth's household, modelled on what De Witt thought was the public interest, was superintended by himself. That De Witt intended to give a bias to the Prince's character, which would make him prefer the interest of Holland to any other, is certain, and it is equally certain that the object was attained. No one, not even William the Silent, was more entirely devoted to his country than William

III. of Holland and afterwards of England was. No man divined the dangers which threatened the Republic more clearly than William did, no one was more prompt in meeting them, and more confident, even under rebuffs, disappointments, and defeats. He conferred, beyond doubt, great benefits on two nations, and the one revered his memory, the other treated him with signal ingratitude, for William was the worst used king who ever sat on the English throne.

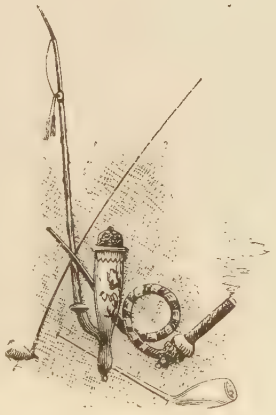
By the treaty of the Pyrenees, in 1659, Louis XIV. had renounced all claims to the throne of Spain through his wife, the king's eldest daughter. This had been effected at the King of Spain's instance. But in 1663 De Witt found out that the French king was by no means disposed to abide by his engagements, and that he meditated, whenever the occasion should arise, the occupation of the Spanish Netherlands. The discovery was made when he proposed to Louis, that the proposed treaty of Partition of 1635 should be carried into effect, in case the Netherlanders did not vindicate their own independence. All that Louis, however, would concede was that, in the event of the death of the Spanish king and his only male heir, he would recognize the independence of the Netherlands under a French protectorate, which of course would be no independence at all. So early had Louis formed that plan, which he pertinaciously strove to effect during his life, and left as a tradition to his successors. So startled was De Witt at this discovery that he approached the Spanish ambassador, and proposed to him to form a treaty between the Republic and Spain on the basis of the

Pacification of Ghent, in 1576. Louis discovered the negotiation, and concealing his anger, resolved to be revenged on the first convenient opportunity. De Witt must have recognized that Holland was running the risk, soon to be the certainty, of a struggle which would be more perilous and more prolonged than the War of Independence was.

Meanwhile, the relations between the States-General and the English Government were every day becoming more strained. Charles, who was on the point of sacrificing his wisest and most faithful counsellor, Lord Clarendon, by throwing on him the scandal of the sale of Dunkirk, was not likely to make any effort for the republic which had sheltered him and his adherents in the time of their greatest danger and penury, and had braved the wrath, and increased the anxiety of the great Protector by doing so. On the contrary, he strove to embitter public opinion in England against the Republic by stimulating the cupidity of the English East India Company, an association which was indeed prosperous, but was fast becoming one of the worst instruments of corruption in the country, by systematically bribing Parliament in the interests of its monopoly; for while the Dutch were striving to secure a trade for themselves alone in that part of the world, the East India Company were, by virtue of their charter, excluding every Englishman but themselves from any commerce in the Indian seas.

Before Parliament had given shape to its ill-will, the Court began war by attacking the Dutch settlements in the Gulf of Mexico, and the eastern shore

of North America. Shortly after the discovery of the Hudson River the Dutch had planted a colony on Manhattan Island, with the name of New Amsterdam. In 1664 the colony was attacked by the English admiral, Holmes. As the attack was unexpected, and the town was undefended, it was immediately surrendered and annexed to the British plantations. Its name was changed in compliment to the royal buccaneer who planned this expedition, and it became New York.



PIPES.

Charles disavowed the acts of Holmes, and even imprisoned him, but made no restitution. He gave the Dutch envoy fair words which cost him nothing, and made vigorous preparations for war, which cost the English and Dutch a good deal. On the other hand, De Witt, who saw through the king's duplicity, and had put a considerable fleet under the command of De Ruyter, sent his admiral secret orders to proceed at once to the coast of Guinea and retake the forts which the English had seized. De Ruyter was generally successful. Charles retaliated by seizing all the Dutch vessels which he could lay his hands on, and having obtained large grants from Parliament, by declaring war. The first battle of the war, that of Southwold Bay, was disastrous to the Dutch, and in

the next year nothing of importance was done. In the great battle of 1666, the advantage was on the side of the Dutch; and in 1667, De Ruyter burnt the English fleet in the Medway, and peace was soon negotiated.

Shortly after the peace was proclaimed, Charles, whose people began to discern what were the designs of the King of France in the Netherlands, despite his reluctance at giving any offence to Louis, sent Sir William Temple to the Hague, for the purpose of negotiating an alliance with Holland. De Witt unwillingly acceded to the proposal, for he foresaw that no reliance could be placed on Charles, that he would irreconciliably offend Louis, and that if recourse was had to arms, Holland alone would have to bear the brunt of the struggle. But he gave in, and induced the deputies of the States to acquiesce in his policy. The terms of the treaty allowed Louis to keep some of his Flemish conquests, but restrained him, under the risks of war with England and the States, from making further acquisitions. This treaty, as Sweden shortly after joined it, was the famous "Triple Alliance," which Temple always considered his greatest achievement. It formed the basis and model of those great alliances which, at a subsequent period, were entered into with the view of chastising the ambition of Louis.

The terms of this treaty have been justly criticised. Spain had been despoiled, and England and Holland sanctioned the spoliation. It was a poor show of courage to condone a wrong, and to avow a determination that the wrong should go no further. But

England and Holland were in no condition to give effect to their resolve. The costs of the late war weighed heavily on both, and the distrust of the English towards the king and his administration was profound. Had it not been for the intense dread which the English had of the possible revival of a man and an army like that of Cromwell and the new model, it seems impossible to doubt that the English nation would have sent Charles and his brother "on their travels again" as the king used to call his exile. The strength of Charles' position was the hatred of the Commonwealth, the memory of which was still as keen as ever. So they tried a middle course; in attempting to exclude James from the succession, failed, and were constrained finally to get rid of the reigning house. But the value of the Triple Alliance was not in its immediate effects. It was of force as a precedent.

The Triple Alliance was hardly signed when Louis seduced Charles by bribes and a new mistress, into breaking it. The temptation was strong. Charles was to be subsidized to such an extent as to be made independent of Parliament. He was to be enabled to restore Romanism in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and acquiesce in the conquest of the United Provinces. The bribes and the mistress were conveyed to Charles by his sister, the Duchess of Orleans, the king's brother's wife. On her return to France, she died speedily, not without suspicions of poison.

De Witt was entirely deceived. He had information as to the designs of Louis and the despotism of Charles, but he disbelieved his informants. He could

not conceive it possible that the English king would acquiesce in such an aggrandisement of France as would result from the subjugation of the United Provinces. He did not understand his man. The first thing which Charles thought of was the means of gratifying his appetites ; the second that of restoring the religion to which he secretly inclined, if indeed he had not already joined it ; the third was the re-establishment of absolute government. He believed, and with some justice, that the odious memories of the Commonwealth could enable him to almost, if not quite, achieve the last object. In order to complete the deception, Charles assured the Dutch envoy that his mind was made up, and that he was firmly resolved to maintain the alliance. He had even deceived Temple by his assurances, though he was already bound to Louis by a secret treaty, and was receiving the reward of his perfidy.

Meanwhile Louis had conquered Lorraine, and Charles had agreed to admit the Emperor of Germany into the alliance. Next he recalled Temple, and De Witt's eyes were opened. Had De Witt been served, as William the Silent had been served at the court of Philip the Second a century before, when all the secrets of the Escorial were duly forwarded to him, the Dutch would not have been hoodwinked. Had De Witt boldly faced the situation, and seeing that the reconciliation of the Dutch factions was the one thing necessary, had acquiesced without grudging in the elevation of William to the office of Stadtholder and Captain-General, he might have averted danger from himself and his country, have forced Charles to

drop his bribes, and enlisted English sympathy on his side. But his hatred of the house of Orange and of William's father paralysed his judgment. Temple soon discovered on his return to England, what were the sentiments of the king and the cabal. Disappointed and disgusted at being made a tool and a dupe, Temple retired into private life.

As De Witt was deceived in the character of Charles, so he was duped by Louis. The French king flattered him, and tried to bribe him, complimented him on his disinterestedness and integrity, and assured him of his continued goodwill. He had affected to sympathise with his dislike and distrust of the house of Orange, and with his unwillingness to admit William into any share of the administration. Meanwhile Louis did his best to induce the German princes to be neutral. He succeeded with the emperor, and with the ecclesiastical states which lay on the Dutch border. He subsidised the disaffected Hungarians, with a view of effectually preventing the emperor from disregarding his engagement, and he succeeded in bribing the Swedes into a desertion of the Triple Alliance. He had thus bought or entrapped all possible enemies, and had effectually isolated the Dutch, who, alarmed at his preparations, and asking their import, were told that they would know next spring. Meanwhile Charles assured the Dutch envoy that he would prevent France from making war on them, and would assist them in case he found Louis disposed to be aggressive with his fleet.

Just as war was seen to be inevitable, William of Orange was made Captain-General. No other course

was possible. But De Witt contrived to load his commission with disagreeable and irritating conditions, and to limit its duration to a year. In addition to inexperience and want of military training, William was put over an army which had been disorganized by long abstention from military duties, and by the sloth and negligence of its officers. Louis declared war, without alleging any pretext beyond this, that it was not consistent with his glory to endure the conduct of the States any longer, and commenced the campaign with an army of 120,000 men. De Witt lost all courage and proposed to treat. But the terms which they offered were rejected by Louis, and Holland recovered the courage of despair. De Ruyter was more fortunate in his encounter with the English fleet

But soon the Orange mob at Amsterdam, after vainly endeavouring to assassinate the brothers De Witt, John and Cornelius, and having then striven to destroy them on a false accusation, attacked the prison in which they were, dragged them out and murdered them, near the spot where Barneveldt had been judicially slain. It is difficult to acquit the Prince of Orange of tacit compliance with the outrage. Besides, he gave a pension to the false accuser of the two statesmen.

XXIX.

TO THE PEACE OF NIMEGUEN.

THE De Witts were murdered in 1672, and the whole administration was forthwith transferred to the hands of the Prince of Orange. This was indeed inevitable. The party of the De Witts was paralysed by the outbreak, the people insisted on the elevation of the Prince of Orange to his ancestral dignities, and the condition of the Republic, menaced at once by two powerful enemies, Louis of France and Charles of England, required that the administration of affairs should be strengthened. It was fortunate for Holland, that, though the means by which the young Stadtholder was raised to his dignity are as indefensible as could be conceived, the resolution and patriotism of William were as conspicuous and as unyielding as those qualities were in the most distinguished of his race. He had not indeed the military genius of Maurice his great uncle, or Frederic Henry his grandfather, but for unshaken fortitude and persistent love of his country, he was a counterpart of his great-grandfather, William the Silent, and he was, besides,

WILLIAM III.

with better opportunities perhaps, the shrewdest diplomatist which the house of Orange has ever produced.

William had been trained in habits of reserve and prudence. Since the premature death of his father and mother, his bringing up had been in the hands of those who were distinctly opposed to the pretensions of his family. For twenty years, the government had been an aristocratic republic, which had taken every possible means to weaken the influence of the Orange party. It was necessary for William to be cautious and reticent in the highest degree, to be wary and self-reliant, to study the characters of those who were opposed to his elevation, and to cautiously win the friendship of those whom he might hereafter trust and employ. In his youth he had been too openly friendly with Zulestein, and the jealousy of the existing government removed this person, in whom he afterwards put absolute trust, from his company. William had indeed to learn the art of war, and to do the best he could in striving to secure his country's independence against the able generals who were trained in the armies of Louis. He was never their match in battle, but there was no ruler of Holland, who so rapidly minimized or retrieved defeat and loss.

William instantly rose to the occasion, while his country was administered by the chief of the municipal aristocracy. William was ready to join them in suing for peace. But as soon as he became Stadtholder, though only twenty years of age, he encouraged the States to refuse the terms which Louis and Charles proposed, as discreditable and ruinous

to resist to the last, to consider how great their resources still were, to seek for allies who would co-operate with them in thwarting French ambition, and rather than yield, in the last extremity to transfer themselves and their fortunes, to the Eastern Empire which they had founded. Louis and Charles, who had striven to secure for William the rank and position which he had now reached, found that he was resolute in maintaining the independence of that country, which they had hoped by his means to humilate or dismember.

The Dutch had opened the dykes, and at great loss and sacrifice had effectually barred the progress of the French. William took the field at once, and though he was unable to achieve the purposes with which he commenced his campaign, he was able to show that his army was capable of active resistance to his powerful enemy. But even in the first winter, when the French troops tried to attack the Hague by marching over the ice, the success of the attempt was only frustrated by a sudden thaw. More than once the peculiar geographical position of Holland saved it from what appeared to be imminent destruction.

Though as a general William was very moderately successful, he never lost the confidence of his countrymen. They early appreciated his patriotism and sagacity, and constantly explained his failures by the fact that the boldness of his projects was in excess of his powers. Beyond this, several of the European Powers, though they had no great liking for the Dutch, were alarmed at the aggrandisement of

France, and assisted Holland. This was the case with Spain, with Brandenburg (soon to be the kingdom of Prussia), and afterwards the Scandinavian kingdoms.

The Dutch believed, and with some reason, that the accession of the English king's nephew to the highest office in the Republic, which Charles had always demanded, would disarm English hostility. But Charles was in the pay of France, and was entirely incapable of gratitude or honour. It was necessary, however, for Charles to keep his parliament in good humour, they being utterly disinclined to the war, and to yield to them in a matter on which he was exceedingly reluctant, the political proscription of the Catholics, before he could get any pecuniary assistance from them. He was able to furnish a fleet, which in conjunction with that of France, seemed likely to be able to overwhelm the Dutch on sea.

The Dutch, under the command of De Ruyter and Tromp, fought two naval battles with the combined English and French fleets, on June 7th and June 14 1673, in which a slight advantage was on the side of Holland. On August 21st another battle equally undecisive was fought. But in more distant regions, and in privateering, which was the most powerful and common kind of naval warfare at the time, the Dutch were far more successful, little damage being done to their trade, and much loss being suffered by English merchants.

Meanwhile the ambition of Louis was consolidating European enmity towards France. The Kings of Sweden and Denmark espoused the cause of the

Provinces. Spain made vigorous efforts on behalf of the Netherlands, and therefore on behalf of Holland, and even the Emperor of Germany entered into an alliance with the States. There can be no doubt that not a little of this jealousy of France was due to the diplomacy of William. Louis was compelled to abandon the conquests which he had made in the Provinces, though in doing so he inflicted as many insults and as much injury as he could on the people whose towns he temporarily occupied. The consequence was that the parts of Holland which had suffered most supplied the most ardent partizans for the future of the Stadtholder.

The English Parliament was determined to put an end to the war with Holland, which Charles, in order to secure French bribes, was anxious to carry on. They refused to vote supplies unless the Dutch were obstinately set on war. The Dutch soon became aware of this feeling, and instantly took advantage of it, by approaching Parliament through the king. Despite the reluctance of Charles, Parliament, on learning the Dutch proposals, absolutely refused to make any further grants, addressed the king in favour of peace, and enforced their action by threatening his ministers with impeachment. Charles was forced to give way, and again employed Sir William Temple in negotiating a peace with Holland. A few days sufficed to complete the negotiations. It is not unlikely that the treachery of Charles and the hatred of James to the Dutch made this nation disposed to assist that expedition, which fourteen years later expelled the male Stewarts from the English throne.

The evacuation of Holland by the French, and the alliance with Holland, compelled the two Bishops of Munster and Cologne, who had captured some towns in Holland, to sue for peace and restore their conquests.

The Prince of Orange got all the credit of these indirect successes. The States made the office of Stadtholder hereditary in his descendants, invited him to contract a marriage, and made him handsome gifts of money, the Dutch East India Company settling a portion of their profits on him and his heirs. The prudence of the Prince was shown again in the resolute way in which he insisted that those parts of the United Provinces which had been occupied and evacuated by the French, should be restored to all their ancient privileges. This policy conciliated these restored States to the Prince, and they now vied with each other in conferring the largest powers on the Stadtholder. William took advantage, perhaps naturally, of this good feeling, and remodelled the constitution of the recovered States of Utrecht, Guelderland, and Overyssel in his own political interests, which were after all those of Holland. William became more absolute in these States than he was in any other part of the Republic. His policy in war and peace was alike beneficial.

The French king saw that Charles was unable to prevent the peace which Temple negotiated, and he determined to avenge himself on Spain. Now at this time Spain still possessed the Netherlands and a frontier on the eastern side of France. These Louis attacked successfully. The Stadtholder, now Com-

mander-in-chief of the Spanish contingent as well as of the Dutch troops, encountered Condé and the French forces at Seneff, where a desperate struggle took place, lasting from morning to midnight. Though William was not victorious here, he was not defeated, and actually gained some of the advantages of victory by the capture of one or two important places.

In 1675 attempts were made to bring about a peace, and Sir W. Temple was again sent to Holland to sound the Stadtholder and the States. It was on this occasion that a proposal was made to William to bring about a marriage between himself and Mary, the oldest daughter of the Duke of York. But William showed no inclination to close with the offer, and was not particularly anxious to put an end to the war.

In point of fact the Prince had been offered by one of the States whose interests he had defended, the title of Duke of Guelderland, with the hereditary but limited sovereignty over that state. But the other provinces, though they had given the Stadtholder almost unlimited power, took alarm at the suggestion that he should in any part of the Republic step out of the position of the First Minister of Holland into that of a hereditary sovereign. It is true that they had made his rank and office hereditary, and had given him ample powers, but still as long as he was Stadtholder only, what they had given they could revoke. If he became, however, a king or sovereign, his position and theirs would be totally altered, and in their eyes for the worse.

William was astonished and annoyed at the almost universal resistance which the project met with, and in responding to some of the States, he could not conceal his irritation, while he thought it prudent to disclaim any intention of accepting the offer. But at the same time, as he saw how important he was to the States in time of war, this rebuff made him more than ever disinclined to peace. He saw that a Stadtholder, when the war was over would be a very different person from a commander-in-chief holding the strings of a European alliance, and he probably thought besides that the continuance of the war would weaken Louis and strengthen the allies. The war was therefore continued, despite the efforts and good offices of Temple. It was carried on with varied success, but, on the whole, to the advantage of France, which kept making conquests in the Netherlands, on the Spanish frontier, and even in Holland, though at great cost to itself. The French even fought on sea with the Dutch in the Mediterranean, a battle in which De Ruyter lost his life. There are few of the naval heroes of Holland whose patriotism it so lofty, and whose courage and conduct are so conspicuous as those of De Ruyter were. There is none whose deeds are more copiously commemorated in the historical picture galleries of Amsterdam. The death of De Ruyter, ascribed to the insufficient fleet which he was bidden to command, diminished for a time the popularity of the Stadtholder.

Events were now constraining all parties to desire peace, though for a time only Sweden and the Republic expressed their desire for it. The latter

found its commerce slipping into the hands of the English. The Navigation Act had injured them not a little; the continuance of the war, and the successes of the French privateers, had harmed them still more. At this time the English East India Company was making rapid strides. The profits of its trade were very great; the interests which it embraced were very numerous and very powerful, and large private fortunes were rapidly accumulated from the profits of its stock. Besides, the States were really bearing the greater part of the expenses of the war, for while the cost of their own armaments was great, they were subsidising the allies. The taxation of the Hollanders was enormous and oppressive, and nothing but the thrift and parsimony of the people enabled them to bear the load which was put on them. But William, like Maurice, was anxious to prolong the war. He insisted that the renewal of the Treaty of the Pyrenees should be made the first condition of peace, which meant that Louis should relinquish all his conquests. At last William was almost alone in his opinion.

The King of France saw, as he thought, an opportunity of breaking up the alliance by making peace severally with the combatants. He offered to the emperor the boundaries of the peace of Westphalia, to Holland the restoration of the only Dutch town which was now in his possession. He resolved, on the other hand, to enlarge his frontier at the expense of Spain, and to recover for Sweden, whose alliance he had purchased, all that she had lost in Northern Germany. The Prince of Orange, seeing his country-

men bent on peace, felt constrained to go with them, but determined to make one more effort before he finally yielded.

His anxiety was to induce the King of England to enter anew into that alliance with Holland which had been negotiated by Sir W. Temple after the first war with England. He therefore informed this minister that he was anxious now to effect that marriage with Mary, the daughter of the Duke of York, which he had declined so coldly a few years before, and with this view visited England. Charles wished the peace to precede the marriage, but William with some show of reason alleged, that such a line of action would make him suspected of postponing public considerations to his own private wishes. Danby, afterwards Duke of Leeds, persuaded Charles to give way, and the Stadtholder and Mary were married in 1677. She was the only respectable Stewart.

In London, William and Charles discussed the terms on which peace should be granted, and Charles engaged himself to declare war against both France and Spain if the terms were not accepted. Louis, who it was thought, would reject these terms at once, knew the mind of the English king better than William did, and affected to treat on this basis, with the object of prolonging the negotiations. In England popular feeling against France rose so high, that Charles was forced to call his parliament together to accept a grant from them, and enlist an army.

The Dutch determined, however, to accept such terms as, leaving a sufficient number of towns in the Spanish Netherlands, between the French conquests

and their own frontier, and restoring to them all which they had lost, would put an end to the war. Upon this basis a truce of six months was agreed to, which was afterwards prolonged. The Emperor, the Elector, and the King of Denmark, who had been carrying on the war at the expense of Holland, were indignant at the States for not allowing themselves to be ruined. After some appearance of activity on the part of Charles, the Dutch agreed to peace with France.

The Stadtholder was exceedingly dissatisfied with what had occurred. He thought and thought correctly, that if Charles had been firm, the peace of 1678 might have been founded on the lines of the treaty of the Pyrenees, and the neutral territory between Holland and France have been extended to its old limits. He saw that the treaty of Nimeguen had left the French far stronger than they were before, and he predicted that another war would shortly be waged, in order to maintain what is called the balance of power in Europe. In his anger, even after the peace was signed, he attacked Luxemburg, the French general in his camp near Mons, and fought a battle there. But Louis, who had obtained all the solid advantages which he desired, took no offence at this breach of faith. William, however, cherished the utmost suspicion of the French monarch, and there can be no doubt that his dissatisfaction at the peace of Nimeguen led to those two long and costly wars which were so destructive, and which entirely humiliated the house of Bourbon.

XXX.

FROM THE PEACE OF NIMEGUEN TO THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION.

THE ten years which intervened between the peace of Nimeguen and the next outbreak of war was one of continual anxiety and alarm. The peace had practically confirmed the French king in his acquisitions, and convinced him that he could quarrel safely with all Europe, and aggrandise himself at the expense of his neighbours. His resources were so considerable, the patience of his subjects was so enduring, and the discipline of his army so perfect, that he believed, as many other persons believed, that he had the destinies of Europe in his hands. Indeed, that Europe, however united, should be able to resist the domination of France, was believed to have become possible only through the astonishing errors in tactics which the pride and self-will of Louis led him to commit. The English king was a pensioner of France, and could be counted on as neutral, the Spanish monarchy was reduced to the extremity of weakness, the Germany emperor was engaged in

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incessant struggles with the Turks, and with his own revolted subjects in Hungary, and Louis was supposed to have been in league with both.

In the early years of this uneasy peace, Louis strove to strengthen his frontier by building with all the appliances which science at that time possessed the strongest fortresses. But, on the other hand, he quarrelled with the Jansenists, a school which, while within the Roman Church, contained the most pious and learned men of that communion, and strove to extirpate the Huguenots. He gave himself up entirely to the advice of the Jesuits, but insulted, plundered, and irritated the Pope. He continued his attacks on the Spanish Netherlands, and captured city after city. He bombarded Genoa, simply because it had been on good terms with Spain, and constrained the Doge of that ancient city to sue for peace at Versailles, under insulting conditions. Every state in Europe was irritated and alarmed at his pretensions and his actions.

Many of the French nobles and a large section of the French people had embraced the Reformation and had accepted the teaching and the discipline of Calvin, the form of religion which had been adopted in Holland. The Huguenots, as these sectaries were called, had formed the mainstay of Henry IV. Without their aid, their grandfather of the French king, the grand monarch, as his contemporaries called him, would never have worn the crown of France. They were, as a rule, loyal to the monarch of their choice, even after he had deserted the creed in which he had been brought up, and which he long

professed. Henry saw, or thought he saw, no chance for his final victory, unless he was reconciled to the Roman Church. He suffered himself to be converted, foreseeing that he could thus win the Malcontents, without seriously affronting his own friends. But he accorded the Huguenots toleration, by the famous Edict of Nantes, and allowed them to retain in their own hands certain fortresses, and even districts, colleges, and churches.

It was the policy of Richelieu to consolidate the power of the French monarchy, to diminish the privileges and weaken the political independence of the French sectaries. In course of time, many of the nobles of the Huguenot party deserted the creed which their fathers maintained, and like the king whom they had fought for, reconciled themselves to the Church. But the great body of the sectaries remained faithful to their creed. They naturally dwelt in towns, and became the principal manufacturers, artisans, and merchants of France. The Huguenots were the people whom the policy of Colbert had favoured, and their enterprise and wealth enabled them to establish in France those industries which were the mainstay of French trade, and the source of the king's revenue. These men possessed the largest part of that wealth which is the life of manufacturers and commerce.

The Hollanders and the English had a profound interest in the fortunes of the Huguenots. It was a matter of common religious feeling, for some of French sectaries had been among the most famous and competent of the generals whom Louis employed

Now it was these persons whom Louis wished to drive into the Church of Rome by force, and after a time, when they refused compliance with his will, to drive from France. He quartered soldiers on them, and harried them by exactions, he destroyed their churches and schools, he bribed those he could into compliance with his wishes, and he punished with the greatest severity those who relapsed into their ancient creed. In time districts once almost entirely peopled by the reformed sectaries were coerced into conformity.

Finally on October 2, 1686, he revoked, amid the applause of the Jesuits and the congratulations of the Court bishops, the famous Edict of Nantes. Then came a gigantic emigration of the wealthiest, the most industrious, and the most vigorous of the French people. The emigration of the Huguenots was nearly as disastrous to France as the expulsion of Moriscoes in the beginning of the century had been to Spain. The manufacturers came in great numbers to England and Holland, where they were heartily welcomed, bringing with them those arts of which France had previously a monopoly. The subscriptions collected in the English churches on behalf of these refugees were exceedingly large, and mightily vexed Louis and James, who had now succeeded Charles. Men who had grown grey in the military and naval service of the French king now joined the armies of his most implacable enemies, and did eminent service in the struggle which now became imminent. Such men were Marshal Schomberg and Ruvigny. Thousands of trained soldiers and skilful seamen left the country which persecuted them and transferred their services to those who welcomed them.

But not only did Louis weaken himself and lessen the resources of his kingdom by the persecution of the Huguenots, but his pride and violence was raising enemies against him on all sides. He put forward claims to the Palatinate, he forced one of his creatures on the Pope, and strove to make him Bishop of Cologne; he even entered into a personal quarrel with Innocent XI., and made him incline to the alliance which was gradually forming against France. The occasion of this quarrel is curious and instructive. In all civilized countries the person and the domicile of an ambassador are inviolable. It is obvious that it would be impossible for an envoy to perform his functions, unless as long as he resides in a country which is still friendly, he has complete power over his own actions. When countries go to war, the system is suspended. The ambassador is withdrawn. Now every one of the Catholic Powers had an envoy at Rome. There had grown up a custom among these personages of insisting on the privilege of their office being extended to all persons whom they might employ and even harbour, and as many of these envoys at the Papal court thought proper to surround themselves with a large retinue and sometimes large bodies of troops, the quarters in which they resided became an asylum to all the bad characters in Rome. Murders and robberies were committed and the perpetrators shielded from the consequence of their acts. Smugglers took up their abode in these sanctuaries, and the papal revenue was seriously compromised by contraband trade. Innocent was determined to put a stop to the scandal, and found it not difficult to induce the Catholic Powers

to restrain within reasonable limits the licence which had been customary. But Louis insisted on continuing the obnoxious system in the person of his ambassador, and sent an envoy with a small army to Rome, whom the Pope refused to admit to an audience. In revenge for this Louis overran the territory of Avignon, and united it to his dominions.

From the peace of Nimeguen onwards, William of Orange had striven to procure a confederation of the European Powers, ostensibly to secure and maintain the provisions of the peace, but really as a counterpoise against the menacing ambition of France. But the principal ally whom he hoped to secure was his uncle, Charles of England, and he seems to have been unacquainted with the secret engagements which that utterly unprincipled sovereign had made with the French king. The States of Holland, however, entirely distrusted Charles, and feared to provoke Louis, who, as it appears that they believed, might be anxious to remain on good terms with the Republic. They were merely anxious to maintain the peace.

The action of Louis himself soon disabused the Dutch of their confidence. Louis insisted to securing some towns of the Spanish Netherlands which had been expressly restored at the peace, he attacked Luxemburg, he occupied Alsace, he got possession of Strasburg, and fortified it for himself. On these acts came the persecution and expulsion of the Huguenots, and Louis succeeded in alienating from himself those states and cities of Holland which had been hitherto anxious to maintain a good understanding with him. Under these circumstances

William found that the efforts which he was making to secure the formation of a league against France were more likely to be successful. He contrived to induce the King of Sweden to enter into the alliance, and he used every effort to induce Charles of England to take the same step. But Charles refused, and William induced the Emperor of Spain and some of the German princes to join in the alliance. William hoped that at last he should be able soon to enter into a fresh struggle with France, but the obstinate refusal of the city of Amsterdam to back up his policy foiled him. He succeeded, however, in inducing the States to strengthen their navy, and to keep an effective army.

In February, 1685, Charles of England died and his brother James, the father-in-law of William, succeeded. James put on a show of vigour, declared that he would maintain the European balance, and though he was not above receiving the French king's money, exhibited more sense of personal dignity and national feeling than Charles did. He even affronted Louis, and by doing so prepared his own ruin. Meanwhile William kept on good terms with his father-in-law, whose succession he had good reason to expect, and sent away Monmouth from the Provinces. It is alleged by some that he was privy to Monmouth's invasion. Certainly he must have been as dissatisfied with the assumption of the royal title by that adventurer as James was. He not only disavowed it, but sent six regiments in the Dutch service to co-operate with James against the rebels. Meanwhile William had at last contrived to establish an agree-

ment between those who were alarmed at the progress of France under the name of the league of Augsburg.

It is not easy to see when the scheme first took shape of dispossessing James from the English throne. Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, had quitted England, now no safe place for him, and was soon as deeply in William's counsels as any man ever was. On the other hand, William sent one of his most trusted adherents, Dykvelt, over to London in order that he might enter into an understanding with the English nobles, disabuse them of any impression which they might have as to his sympathy with his father-in-law's theories of government, and at the same time to assure James of the good will of the States. There is little doubt that Dykvelt was trusted by the English malcontents, who had by this time thoroughly mistrusted James, and were gradually forming those plans which eventuated in the English Revolution. At last William ventured on publishing and circulating his opinions about what James was bent on, the repeal of the Test Act, and the indulgence to Protestant Dissenters. The publication of this document, though it angered James, increased the popularity of William in England.

The birth of the Prince of Wales, known in later history as the Old Pretender, destroyed all William's hopes of the succession to the English throne, which he may have contemplated, and was a serious blow to what William certainly had at heart, the creation of a powerful league against the French king. With England friendly to France, or neutral in the coming struggle, it was justly feared that the alliance would

be powerless. It might succeed if England were to declare on the side of the Allies. At first William recognized his infant brother-in-law, but when it was reported that the child was supposititious, and the report was believed, William ceased to have the child's name mentioned in public worship. William must have joined in the popular belief; else it is difficult to see why he should have given James what was a practical warning that he would claim his wife Mary's inheritance by force of arms. To disallow the Prince of Wales was to claim the English throne. The birth of the Prince was the fatal offence of James.

William had sent Zulestein to congratulate the English king and queen on the event, and Zulestein brought back the invitation from the English nobles to William, that he should invade England and liberate it from the Government which was violating the law, and suspending the constitution. William was ready enough, but the difficulties were great. He had to carry out his project in secret, to hoodwink James and Louis, and to induce the United Provinces to acquiesce in his plans. Fortunately for William, Louis had been affronted by James, and was at the height of his quarrel with the Pope and the Emperor, while William was making his preparations. Just at the eve of the enterprise of the Prince of Orange, Louis declared war against the emperor and sent his forces to the Palatinate, far away from the Dutch frontier and thus left the sea open to William.

XXXI.

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION.

JAMES THE SECOND of England had long announced his conversion to the Roman Church, to the alarm and indignation of the English people. But his brother Charles had succeeded in baffling the design of Parliament to exclude him from the throne, and had, after the last effort made in that direction, resolved to summon no more Parliaments. In order, however, should it be necessary to meet such an assembly again, he had, by a trick of law, and with the services of unscrupulous judges, contrived to effect the surrender of the charters by which the boroughs exercised their franchises, and, to a great extent, their representation in Parliament, and to re-grant them under such conditions as to secure the royal influence in all or most of them. How well he had taken his measures is proved by the complete subservience of the only Parliament which his brother and successor ever summoned. This Parliament made James such enormous grants that he was under no necessity, except war broke out, to have recourse to

his people again ; and there can be no doubt, had his reign been prolonged, that he would have never summoned a Parliament.

James was as fond of French money as Charles, but he was not nearly so prodigal, and a great deal more proud. He resented the advice of the monarch to whom he was indebted, and even disavowed that understanding with him which he had entered into in consideration of the money which Louis advanced him. Meanwhile he had contrived to alienate every one from him, even the Church of England, which had been preaching the doctrine of passive obedience for a generation. His design was to effect the conversion of the English people to his religion, and to employ every means which the law and his prerogative gave him in order to effect this result. In order to make a party, beyond the Roman Catholics in his kingdom, he proclaimed, by his sole authority and in defiance of the law, absolute toleration for all Dissenters, and the suspension of all laws and disabilities which had been enacted against the Roman Catholics, hoping that thereby he might gain the Dissenters, while he had no suspicion that the English clergy would break away from their loyalty to him, however much they were affronted and injured. In order to secure his objects, he brought over a considerable body of troops from Ireland, all men of his own creed, and all officered by men of his own creed. Now if there was one thing which was more injurious than anything else to his father, it was the bare suspicion that he had meditated the enlistment of an Irish army against the Parliamentary forces, and now

James had Irish regiments under arms in the vicinity of London, with the object, as it appeared, of overawing the city of London. And as I have already said, the birth of a son, who would be brought up in his father's obnoxious creed, made the permanent degradation of England an assured prospect.

The French envoy at the Hague was not blind to the meaning of William's preparations, and had informed Louis and James, assuring the States that there was an understanding between the two monarchs, under which any attack on either would be treated as a declaration of war. James, however, in a fit of pride, denied that there was any understanding beyond that which was known to the whole world, and so offended his French ally, who practically left him to his fate. By the aid of Dykvelt and Fagel William contrived to induce, at last, all the United Provinces to assist him in his undertaking. They had probably learned how hostile the English people were to their infatuated king. They were informed of the assistance which was promised by the leading English nobles, and they must have been entirely convinced how dangerous the designs of Louis were. Now if war were to come, it was of the utmost consequence to them that England should be the ally of Holland, and not passively or actively on terms of friendship with France. They remembered the dangers which they ran in 1672, and many of them no doubt recalled how, a century before, the aid of the English had been of the greatest importance to them in the War of Independence. It must have been for such reasons as these that the States overcame their re-

THE VIJVERBERG AT THE HAGUE.

pugnance to engaging in costly hostilities, and these with the dreaded King of France. Besides, William had contrived to gain the warm friendship and close alliance of the Elector of Brandenburg. He knew that he should have the support of the Emperor of Germany, and that even the Pope was favourable to the enterprise of the heretic prince, if he could only be free from the insults of France, the king of which was now engaged in thrusting a partisan of his into a German bishopric, in defiance of both Pope and emperor. He actually seized the opportunity of inflicting a serious loss on the Dutch fisheries, and so had alienated these persons who had hitherto been his partisans.

On the 29th of October, New Style, but on the 19th according to the reckoning of most Protestant countries, the fleet started on the expedition, but, meeting with bad weather, was obliged to return to port, a circumstance which induced James to conclude that there was now no present danger. It had been the intention of William to effect a landing in the North of England, where he believed his partisans were strong, and where he might expect Scotch assistance. Hither James had gone with his forces. There was some delay in starting again, and the wind made it necessary that William should land on the south-west coast. Here he landed at Torbay, on Nov. 5th, Old Style, an auspicious day to English minds, because it was the anniversary of the deliverance of King and Parliament from the Powder Plot. He was gladly received, and marched slowly towards London.

James was deserted by every one—by his first wife's relations, by his most trusted captains, by his army, by the clergy, even by his own daughter Anne and her husband. Never was king more cruelly disabused of the impressions which he cherished a few weeks before, of the abiding loyalty of his people to him. He made no stand whatever, indeed he did not know on what he could rely, for every prop of his throne had crumbled away. For a time he had absolutely no party left. It is doubtful whether even those who afterwards professed allegiance to him would have suffered him to do more than reign, without being allowed to govern. Many of the Jacobites of later times would have been content, if his name still figured on coins, was kept on the Great Seal, and was put in the preamble of writs and grants, that he should live in exile, the powers of government being committed to a Regent or Regents. The majority of Englishmen believed that the child was a fraud, even they who made the severest sacrifices in order to avoid acknowledging William. After the old king's death, in 1701, not a few of these took the oaths to the new settlement, thus showing that they had no belief in the son.

William was by no means satisfied with the restraints which the English Parliament imposed on him. He expected to succeed, if not to the powers which his predecessors had overstrained, to a large prerogative and an ample revenue. But the Parliament determined that they would never run the risk of another arbitrary reign. They resolved that they should be permanently necessary to any government.

So they limited their supplies to a year, in order to ensure their annual sitting and an annual review of the expenditure. They did not, indeed, meddle with William's conduct of foreign affairs, for the diplomatic handling of which long years of scandalous inactivity and corruption had made them unfit ; but they exercised a very efficient control over that, without which no diplomacy is of any avail. By the theory of the English constitution, the king had a great prerogative, and was untrammelled in many ways. By the theory of the Dutch constitution, William was only the elective magistrate of a republic, the States-General of which could reprimand, order, and control him. But the King of England exercised far more power in his own nation than he did in his adopted country. Indeed it cannot be doubted that William's quarrels with his English Parliament ruined his constitution and shortened his life.

Still he had achieved a great position, and one of signal service to his country. The English alliance was permanently secured, for the whole nation had deposed the old king, and was certain to stand by its act. Even those who began to wish James back, were convinced that it could not be effected by the aid of Louis. The knowledge that England had been for two reigns the mere tool of France, made even the timid and treacherous indignant at the recurrence of this disgraceful servitude. War was certain to be declared, and war with the object of restoring James. And though his Parliament quarrelled with William, thwarted, and vexed him, so that he seriously thought of resigning his uneasy dignity, they never flinched

during the eight years' war which followed, and would not make peace till the king of the Revolution was acknowledged by France.

The Dutch too now felt themselves in a condition of comparative safety. It is true that they were necessarily involved in a war, the first object of which was the liberation of England from French influences and a hated sovereign ; but there was no prospect now that another 1672 was before them. It is true that they had to put up with several galling conditions in the alliance with England, and to endure that commercial jealousy which had been a habit with English traders for a century. They could get no relaxation of the Navigation Laws, the repayment of the money which they had advanced for William's expedition was vexatiously delayed, and the English Government insisted that the Dutch should follow the English practice, to make prize of all ships which trafficked with the public enemy. Now the Dutch, being almost entirely a commercial nation, were in the habit of trafficking even with their own enemies, and they were very unwilling to enter into an arrangement by which they should introduce neutrals to a trade which they could have carried on on their own account. But they yielded, at least in appearance, though it is probable that they were not very keen-sighted or very diligent in carrying out this part of the bargain. It is noteworthy, and is a proof of the extraordinary influence which William's position gave him, that after his death, they refused, when another war broke out, to renew this engagement with his successor.

The Dutch complained that William made them

the instruments of his English policy ; the English that he favoured the Dutch at their expense, that he trusted no one but Dutch counsellors, and relied on nothing but Dutch troops. These charges probably show that William did, as far as possible, the best he could by both nations. It was difficult for him to trust English statesmen. The profligacy of Charles the Second's Court had seriously degraded the characters of public men, and though the misconduct of James justified the Revolution, the dissimulation by which the old king had been driven to his ruin, had made even the agents of it, though they had associated with William, untrustworthy. In the nature of things, men who have betrayed one master are dangerous instruments for another to use, and William soon found out that they who had taken part in his enterprize were in correspondence with the exiled king ; not, I believe, because they seriously wished or intended his restoration, but from ingrained habits of perfidy and intrigue. But William always retained the affection of his countrymen. Englishmen who accompanied him in his frequent voyages to the Hague were amazed to see how cordially he was received, how his cold manner thawed, and his grave face was relaxed when he was among the Dutch.

It was also quite clear that the English would employ many men and spend much money in the war. Now this meant the negotiation of English remittances to Amsterdam, and good business at its famous bank. For at this time Amsterdam was the commercial centre of Europe, and its bank contained more specie than all the treasuries of the European

states. They who have studied the history of the exchanges at this time can discover how enormous was the profit which the Bank made on the negotiation of English bills. I have little doubt that this profit went a great way towards compensating Holland for the costs which the war involved, and though the Bank was not a State institution, whose profits went to the State treasury, yet it was under the management of the municipal authorities of that city, and its property to a very large extent was theirs.

The Dutch, who were before so averse to war, now requested William that he would declare war against France, a request which he was very ready to gratify. Louis had declared war against Holland immediately on William's landing, not alleging this as the reason for hostilities, for it was not yet clear that the expedition would be successful; but stating that the States had resisted the election of his creature to the see of Cologne. At the same time he declared war against Spain, on the ground that the governor of the Spanish Netherlands had connived at William's expedition. He had already quarrelled with the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria, and the Duke of Savoy, whom he had previously insulted and humbled. William, therefore, had no difficulty in consolidating the Grand Alliance, the members of which engaged themselves not to make peace with France, unless Europe was restored to the condition in which it was left by the treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees. From the days of the Grand Alliance, French historians of capacity reckon the decline of the French monarchy.

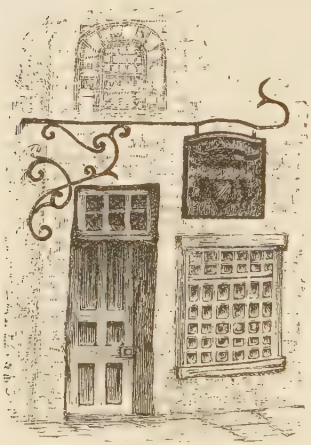
XXXII.

THE WAR OF 1689 TO THE PEACE OF RYSWICK 1697.

POPULAR as William was with his countrymen, he always had differences with the city of Amsterdam. This rich seat of commerce was proud of its municipal privileges, and jealous of any interference with its municipal independence. Amsterdam, in common with the other Dutch towns, had been induced to submit the officers whom it appointed to civil office, to the approval of the Stadtholder. Now, taking advantage of William's absence, they presented their nominees to the Court of Holland, on the ground that in the absence of the Stadtholder, they were acting under their charter. But the State declined to act on their recommendation, or to accept their view of the charter, and after a somewhat angry quarrel the city had to yield.

Again they took offence at Bentinck, the favourite counsellor of the king, who had been raised to the English peerage, and to the great dissatisfaction of the English nobility, had been lavishly enriched by

William, while retaining his place as a Dutch noble in the States. They alleged that he had transferred his allegiance to another sovereign, that he was naturalized in another country, and was therefore no longer a Hollander. But here, again, they were opposed by the rest of Holland, and after having excited the vehement anger of William, were obliged to give way. I refer to these facts in order to show how considerable was William's influence in his native country, where he was able to override the strongly expressed wishes of Amsterdam. In the same way William blockaded and reduced the town of Goes for venturing to resist his authority. He was far more powerful in Holland than in England, and certainly in the face of the trouble before them, it was expedient that the executive should be strengthened.



ALKMAAR WINDOWS.

It is true that the pride and aggressiveness of Louis were irritating the whole of Europe. The outrageous violence of the French armies in the Palatinate had revived the worst memories of the Thirty Years' War. Louis was urging the Turks to attack Germany on the east, in order to prevent Germany from resisting his aggressions. He was threatening the house of Savoy on the Italian

frontier, and harassing Charles the Second on the Spanish. He had occupied the papal dominions in Avignon, and had annexed them. Every one of his neighbours was irritated and alarmed, and it was not difficult, at least on paper, to construct the Grand Alliance referred to in the last chapter. But it was not so easy to put the Alliance in motion.

Holland and England were the two countries which really resisted with any effect the power of the French king. Spain was politically helpless. Her vast empire was an encumbrance rather than an aid. A century and a half of the worst possible kind of government had ruined the Spanish provinces in America. The Government of Spain itself was as demoralizing and disastrous as that of Mexico and Peru. Spanish statesmen were incredibly corrupt and rapacious, and the body of the people of Spain was sunk in sloth and apathy. Industry was held in dishonour. Public spirit was lost. The old discipline of the Spanish army had passed away. It is true that Spanish pride still survived. But it was pride without energy.

Leopold of Germany, who reigned from 1658 to 1705, was a narrow, selfish, sordid bigot. He had to defend himself from the Turks in the East, and the French in the West. His wisdom would have been by timely and generous conciliation, to have united, in the bonds of a common interest, all the parts of his ill-cemented empire against the common enemy and the common danger. But he was far more interested in persecuting his Protestant subjects than in securing them against foreign foes. Besides, the Thirty Years' War had ruined Germany. The country needed

union even more than peace, in order to recover itself, and Germany was divided against itself. The future of Europe seemed almost hopeless in 1689. There were no powers in the civilized world which could be relied on in the coming struggle except Holland and the newly-enfranchised kingdom of England.

William had a far harder task with the country which accepted rather than welcomed him, than he had with his native country. At first all seemed to go well. The defection from James was universal in Great Britain, and the exiled family never had any real party in the country again. But in Ireland William had to fight for his crown, and the conquest of Ireland occupied all the energies of the English Government during the first years of the Revolution, and there was but a faint opposition to Louis and his projects. They were apparently near to being realized. In Flanders, Luxemburg won the battles of Fleurus, Steinkirk, and Neerwinden ; in Western Italy, Catinat was victorious at Staffard and Marsaille ; and Tourville, the French admiral, inflicted serious and apparently irreparable damage on the combined Dutch and English fleets at Beachy Head. The strong fortresses of Mons and Namur were captured, and it seemed that the immediate object of the French king's ambition would be attained in the conquest of the Spanish Netherlands. The military reputation of France remained at the highest as long as Luxemburg lived. He died at the end of the year 1694, when his services were most needed.

William was unfortunate as a commander, for he had to fight against the most accomplished generals which

the art of war had yet produced. He was defeated in every pitched battle which he fought in Europe. But it was early noticed that he lost less by a defeat than other generals. His power of recovery after a repulse was remarkable and continual. The victories of Louis, therefore, in the Low Countries were comparatively barren, and the stubborn resistance of the Dutch and English made it plain at last that the conquest of Flanders, if it were ever to be effected, would be accomplished only after a prolonged and ruinous struggle. "The last pistole wins," was the frequent comment of Louis, but as yet he did not guess where this would be found. In course of time, he discovered that the resources of England and Holland were greater than those of France, and that they would come out of the war with undiminished powers.

The first serious check which Louis suffered was the battle of La Hogue, fought on May 19, 1692. The exiled king, James, deceived by his correspondents, and still more deceived by the hopes which exiles always entertain, was under the impression that an invasion of England would not only be feasible but successful. He had been assured that it would be so by the Jacobites and malcontent Whigs; he was under the impression that the seamen in the fleet desired to restore him, and would refuse to fight against the French, and he had actually been in correspondence with Russel, the admiral. But the King of France had always been dissuaded from the project by Louvois, and Louvois was a person whose advice Louis could not disregard, for he had done more to

secure the military supremacy of Louis than any man living. But on July 6, 1691, Louvois died suddenly after an interview with the king, when high words passed between them. Though the quarrel had been so angry, the king appointed the son of his late minister to the office which his father had held, and with the most unfortunate results.

Louis now determined to invade England, with an army of French and Irish troops—those Irish troops which, after the surrender of Limerick, had passed over to the French king's service. It was impossible to conceive a worse act of imprudence than to attempt an invasion of England with Irish forces. Nothing had contributed more to the downfall of James than the collection of an Irish army in the neighbourhood of London. In the hands of the English enemy, whose name was an object of absolute detestation throughout England, the enrolment of such an army would be sure to excite the most stubborn resistance even from those who had hitherto been disaffected or mutinous. For the English people, and, for the matter of that, the Dutch, however much they may have quarrelled or grumbled when danger was remote, have always forgotten their differences and made an effective truce as soon as ever danger is near. In order to still more irritate his former subjects against him, James put out a manifesto, in which he proscribed the nation whom he imagined to be anxious for his restoration. The Government very wisely reprinted this insane document, with some very natural and practical comments.

The fleet which was to convoy the three hundred

transports to England consisted of seventy-nine ships of the line, some of them being the finest which the dockyards of Brest and Toulon had turned out. Tourville was again commander, and was strictly ordered to fight, and it was determined to undertake the enterprise before the English and Dutch fleet had got to sea. In order to assure himself, James had sent his emissaries among the English admirals. Some of them gave these agents fair words, and forthwith communicated their information to the English Government. The anxiety which the banished king felt, and his desire to acquaint himself with the strength of the feeling in his favour, while it deceived him, undeceived and forewarned the administration. The weather in the Channel is always capricious, and the time for the rendezvous had long passed by, and the French line was not yet formed.

The combined English and Dutch fleet was superior in numbers to that of the French, but in the first part of the battle the vessels engaged, owing to the state of the wind, were about equal on both sides. But, after the contest had been prolonged for five hours, and Tourville saw that he had no immediate prospect of a successful invasion, the wind changed, and the whole allied fleet was able to take part in the battle. It was soon over, and the relics of the French armament fled to Cherbourg and La Hogue, where the army of invasion was waiting to embark. On the 24th of May, after five days' incessant fighting, the French fleet was totally destroyed. All hopes of naval supremacy passed away from France. There was hardly any naval victory which caused more

national exultation both in England and Holland than that of La Hogue. The great commerce of the Republic was now placed in comparative safety, and the last pistole was more likely than ever to be in the Banks of Amsterdam and London.

Still, the Grand Alliance was very nearly collapsing. The northern Powers of Denmark and Sweden, never very hearty in their co-operation, began to grow cool and finally even hostile. The several powers of Germany threatened to make a separate peace with France if they were not handsomely bribed. They even went so far as to state that Louis was ready to pay them for deserting the common cause, and that it was therefore the policy of England and Holland to outbid Louis. Even the German emperor was of opinion, and pretty clearly expressed it, that it was the duty of England and Holland to undertake the defence of his own frontier, and to find him money for the purpose of enabling him to achieve further conquests over the Turks. "I cannot," said William, in writing to his friend Heinsius, "offer a suggestion without being met with a demand for a subsidy." But William succeeded in keeping the coalition together, by giving these royal mendicants, not all that they asked, but more than they had a right to expect. He saved the alliance, but he found it hard to induce the allies to fight.

The Spanish Government, at last seriously alarmed, offered William the regency of the Netherlands. But William refused it. He knew that if he took it, the religious differences between the ruler and people would make his authority precarious. The Nether-

lands, once the most Protestant country in Europe, had now, thanks to the Inquisition, become as Catholic as Spain itself, and much more restive. It was not possible at the end of the seventeenth century to restore the Pacification of Ghent. He therefore recommended the nomination of the Elector of Bavaria, who had good reason for being the enemy of France. A few years later, the Elector found its friendship even more mischievous. But the delay and half-heartedness of the allies led to the loss of Namur.

GIRL'S HEAD.

And now a series of events were recurring, of which historians are apt to take no notice, but which had more to do with the rapid exhaustion of France than any defeats or victories could have. The harvest of 1692 was unfavourable, and for six or seven years the harvests in Western Europe remained unfavourable. In a country like England, where ordinary prices were nearly doubled, much distress prevailed. In France, where the peasant farmer was forced to bear nearly all the charges of government, the cost of the buildings at Versailles and Marli, and the cost of the great king's army, the calamity was ruinous. In Holland, which imported nine-tenths of its food, and had a habit of keeping a store at Amsterdam, which would be sufficient for the wants of two or three years,

which it imported from all parts of the world, whence food could be got, the rise in prices was inconvenient, but not disastrous. The period from 1692 to 1698 inclusive was long remembered in tradition as the seven dear years.

The year 1693 and 1694 were marked by brilliant victories, by horrible cruelties, by great sufferings, but by small military results. Louis began to find his resources fail him. But in the second of these years, the foundation of the Bank of England at once contributed and utilized the resources of the country. In 1695, William undertook and achieved the recapture of Namur, to the great chagrin of Louis. Early in the next year, Louis was unquestionably privy as was also James, to a plot devised for the murder of William, and there is little doubt that Berwick was sent to England in order to encourage, if not to advise, the conspirators. The plot failed, the culprits being detected and executed, as indeed all other conspiracies against William's life failed.

At last both sides were exhausted. Louis was ready to acknowledge William's title, and William saw that for a time the Netherlands, the barrier of Holland, were safe. But the Powers which sacrificed the least, and got the largest subsidies through the war, put forward the most preposterous claims. Spain and Austria demanded what Louis was not likely to grant, and they had no power of enforcing. The absurd formalities of diplomacy seemed likely to postpone the settlement to an indeterminate date, when William and Bentinck entered into a distinct negotiation with the French envoy, and rapidly settled the terms of

peace. The arrangement nearly fell through owing to the selfish and dilatory action of Spain and Austria, which gave Louis an opportunity of insisting on the retention of Strasburg. On the 10th of September the treaty was signed, and the first part of this long war with France was ended.

XXXIII.

FROM THE PEACE OF RYSWICK TO THE TREATY OF UTRECHT.

As soon as ever the power of Louis failed to make progress, it began to decline. We know this now by the evidence of facts. But the terror of Europe after the accession of Philip to the throne of Spain, and the apparent union of all Western Europe, Central America, and the west coast of South America under one master head, or at least under one settled policy, was universal and intelligible. No man at the time could have foreseen that the ambition and cupidity of Louis, the success with which he subdued his nobles and people at home, and the success with which he gratified his ambition abroad, would in time bring about by natural and traceable causes, the great catastrophe which is known in history as the French Revolution. But of all European countries none had so reasonable a fear as the Dutch. The inheritance of Spain included those provinces which William the Silent had nearly gained to the great confederation, and Alva and Parma had securely recovered for Spain.

A wealthy, vigorous, and powerful monarch, who had trained all the commanders of Europe, even those who were to be opposed to him, Marlborough and Eugene, had taken the place of the poor, imbecile, and powerless kings of Spain of the Austrian family in the person of Philip's grandson, and the most able opponent of the French king had just died in what should have been the prime of life, worn out by the folly, short-sightedness, and factiousness of the English Parliament. He was succeeded by his wife's sister, Anne, the silliest person who ever sat on the English throne, and was really strong only by the unbounded deference she showed to Sarah, the imperious wife of Marlborough.

Ever since reaching his majority and the conduct of affairs by himself, Louis had been conspiring against the Dutch Republic. He had conspired against them independently, and in concert with Charles, the profligate whom the English aristocracy restored, and whose career inflicted permanent injury on the public and private morality of the people he was allowed to rule over. He had tried as soon as he could to detach the Stadtholder William from all patriotic aims, and it is not improbable that William so far went with his intrigues as to acquiesce in the murder of the De Witts, the tragedy which followed on the unprovoked war of 1672. But as we have seen, when William in this crisis was raised to the Stadtholderate, he became the persistent and active enemy of Louis. He was not strong enough to grapple with him, but he succeeded in checking him, and though the issues of the wars which ended with the peace of Nimeguen, and the

treaty of Ryswick, had left the position of Louis to all appearance stronger and more imposing than ever, the successes of the great king would have been more secure and more pronounced had not William stood in his way. And now William was gone.

It is probable that Louis never wished to effect the conquest and annexation of the Dutch Republic, any more than Philip of Macedon wished to effect the subjugation of Athens. But it was all important to make it submissive, or at least, neutral. Had Louis succeeded in his plans, had he secured the frontier of the Rhine, and permanently disorganized the Roman empire, he might have given Holland the boon which the grateful Cyclops in his den offered Ulysses, that of being devoured the last. By the neutrality of Holland he would have deprived the Alliance of one among the Powers who could find money for the war, the other being Great Britain, and the people of Great Britain could hardly have been counted on for all the expense which the Spanish war of succession would be sure to entail. Besides, if Holland were neutral, it would soon be possible to cripple the English trade in the East, and finally to come to close quarters with the Dutch. For nearly a century, the French strove to acquire the British factories in India, and the British plantations in America. In the middle of the eighteenth century, it seemed far from improbable that they would succeed. Clive defeated their aims in India, and the first exploits of Washington were directed against them in America. But the military purposes which were finally baffled in the Seven Years' War were the outcome of projects which were originally devised by the ambition of Louis.

Again the Dutch had reason to be alarmed at the intolerance of Louis, who was as resolute in his attempts to extirpate Protestantism as the Inquisition and Alva had been. Louis was not a moral person, not even, except in outward form, a religious one. Philip of Spain sincerely believed that he was fulfilling the highest duties of a Christian in burning Jews and heretics alive after torture. He would have sacrificed his own family to the Inquisition if any suspicion of heresy could have been brought home to them. He would have given up his own life, so he said, if he had fallen away, through mental aberration, or demoniac possession, from the faith which the council of Trent defined. He was by no means disposed to yield to the Pope or his own bishops in temporal matters, however submissive he was in spiritual things, for he kept the patronage of ecclesiastical offices strictly in his own hands. But Philip sincerely and devoutly believed what he wished to impress on others. Within the circle of orthodoxy he welcomed ascetic and passionate devotion, and was as much a monk himself as his official industry allowed him to be.

But Louis was by no means of this mind. He was orthodox, for to his view the unity and strength of France lay in the completeness of its orthodoxy. But he browbeat and insulted the head of his Church with nearly as much persistent bitterness as his ancestor, Philip the Fair did Boniface the Eighth. He despoiled the Pope of his ancient inheritance in France, and never restored it. In consequence of this quarrel a third of the French dioceses were at one time empty, and this in a Church where the offices of a bishop

were considered essential to salvation. He hated heartily all pious enthusiasm. The Quietists were orthodox, but they fell under his ban, and were repressed or exiled. The Jansenists set up a rule of exalted morality, of severe truthfulness, of rigid but not unkindly piety, and Louis was implacable towards them. His own court was entirely orthodox, and profoundly immoral. The fact is, Louis detested singularity. He saw in it a revolt from his authority. No one was to be wiser, stricter, and more virtuous than the King of France was. For this view he had some excuse in the history of the country over which he ruled, for the Huguenot nobles, with all the sternness of their religion, were somewhat turbulent subjects, and Louis, like many other rulers, believed that the repression of opinion was the extinction of opinion.

The Hollanders had now become tolerant, and could not at last be roused to bigotry by the most impassioned and unsparing of their Calvinist preachers. But they could see that a powerful, unscrupulous, and intolerant neighbour, with whom religion was policy, was a danger. In common, too, with most Reformed countries and with not a few of those which were Catholic, they had a hearty aversion to the Jesuits and with reason suspected their purposes. To their intrigues they ascribed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the atrocities that were perpetrated in the Cevennes, and the war of despair, which the Camisards began, a war, the particulars of which were as atrocious as those of the Reign of Terror ninety years later. Now English wits could jest about John

Bull, and Lord Strutt, and Louis Baboon, and Nick Frog; but the King of France was a far more serious person to the Hollanders than he was to the English.

But the principal cause of alarm which the European Powers entertained about Louis and his designs was the total want of faith and honour which characterized the great king. He was as perfidious, as treacherous, as lying as an Italian pupil of Machiavelli. He was an intriguer of the fifteenth century, holding a powerful place in Europe in the eighteenth. No oath, no treaty bound him. If people pointed to his solemn renunciations he had an easy expedient at hand. His parliament, otherwise submissive and docile, stiffly stood out against his relinquishing anything. The Popes used to absolve kings from their oaths for a consideration, the French Parliament, high-minded and resolute only in this, affirmed that his oath was no oath, and Louis expected the European Powers to be satisfied with an interpretation of public duty and good faith with which the servile lawyers, who formed what was called the French Parliament, supplied him. Now a sovereign of great power, of solid purpose, of tenacious will, who has large armies and large means for keeping them afoot, is a very dangerous person at all times. But if to these resources he adds habitual perfidy, and an utter disregard for the most solemn pledges; the distrust which he naturally excites is pretty certain to develop a very energetic and persistent hatred. Nor do I doubt that, had it not been for the English Tories, when they finally acquired an ascendency in Parliament, and over the councils of Anne, Marlborough would have dictated the terms of

peace to Louis in his own capital, and have rent from him all his acquisitions.

There were persons, indeed, both in England and Holland, who saw that the ambition of Louis was overreaching itself. In a past age the matrimonial alliances of European sovereigns were supposed to confer rights over subjects which it was impious to dispute and treasonable to resist. No sovereigns had appealed at a more early date to the principle of nationality than the French sovereigns had, and with greater success. The kingdom of France had been consolidated by the policy of seeking to make every inhabitant glory in the name of Frenchman. But the patriotism of a Spaniard was as keen as that of a Frenchman, perhaps keener; for his name, and the departed glories of his name, were all that he had to recall. The house of Austria had effectually destroyed everything else. The Hollanders, too, had emphatically repudiated dynastic rights. The English had changed the succession and had transferred it over twenty or thirty heads to the most remote descendant of the first Stewart king, to a petty German prince, one of the least considerable potentates in that rope of sand, the later German Empire.

Such persons argued in England—"What interest have we in the question as to whether Philip of Bourbon or Charles of Austria is to reign in Spain? The Spanish Empire is ready to fall to pieces, but we want no part of it. It is very likely that the Emperor of Germany wants to recover those Italian provinces, which his predecessors claimed, sometimes ruled and finally ruined. Very likely the French king

cherishes the dreams of his predecessors, Charles the Eighth and Francis the First, or fancies that he has succeeded to the rights and the designs of his Austrian kinsfolk Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second. He is unquestionally bold, unscrupulous, and ambitious. But he will be less able to turn these dreams into realities, if he hampers himself with the defence of his grandson's inheritance. He will be certainly baffled if he tries to despoil him of any part of it. Nothing is more costly, nothing more disappointing, than the attempt to establish a protectorate over a country which is intensely jealous of its independence, even though it takes the money and accepts the military assistance which it cannot provide out of its own resources. It is difficult enough to assist Spain with entirely disinterested motives. If the King of France, who is never disinterested in his objects, but always selfish and grasping, seeks to enlarge his dominions at the expense of Spain, the more he does for his grandson the more will he and his grandson be hated. The poor creature who just lately died was to his people the impersonation of the Spanish Empire, and a Spanish policy, and though he was son-in-law and nephew to Louis, made war on him for these ends. The Spaniards will never consent to be the tools of France, or allow their king to be a viceroy for his grandfather. If Spanish and French interests are at variance, no ties of blood or alliance will prevent a collision between the two kingdoms, and Philip will be either obliged to follow the policy of the country which has accepted him, or be soon driven from the throne." Events proved that these people reasoned correctly.

In Holland, too, contemporary evidence shows that similar opinions were current. There were public men who saw that Louis was increasing, not lightening his difficulties, that he was engaged, to use a commercial phrase, in doubling his liabilities, indefinitely increasing his expenses, and making no addition to his capital. "Our policy," they argued, "is to keep out of European and especially out of dynastic complications. Our late Stadtholder looked after our interests, though we had to pay a heavy price. We are now again a free republic. It is our wisdom to protect our frontier, to husband our resources and to increase our trade. We are already heavily in debt for our past wars, and while these belligerents are wasting their means we shall be increasing ours. Besides, the English, partly from selfishness, partly from ignorance, insist that we should contract our trade with Spain and France. We deal in the choicest of products. What were once luxuries are now, thanks to our energy and perseverance, common comforts, and we have a monopoly of this trade. The English people would gladly deprive us of it, under the hypocritical pretence of high policy and military necessity. Our course should be to stand aloof. The English are covetous and enterprising, the Germans are covetous and beggarly, and we should not present our trade to to the one and our florins to the other. We can easily get ample guarantees from France, and a substantial barrier on the Flemish frontier. There is no price which Louis will not pay for our neutrality." So I find that the Dutch party which was unfriendly to the war argued during the interval between the succession of Philip and the outbreak of war.

In one particular they were certainly in the right. Louis spared no pains, and no offers to secure the neutrality of the Dutch during the war of the Spanish succession. He would even, it seems, have guaranteed that there should be no military operations in Flanders at all, and that ample indemnities should be given to Holland as the price of neutrality. For he saw that if Holland were neutral not only would half the sinews of war be gone, but that it would be difficult for the allies to land a single soldier on Western Europe. He offered through his agent, Barré, to renew his alliance with the States, to guarantee their commerce, to renew the treaties of Munster, Nimeguen, and Ryswick, with any additional security which they might demand, and to pledge himself that the Spanish Netherlands should be occupied with Spanish troops only. On the other hand, Anne despatched the Earl of Manchester within a week after her accession, to assure the Dutch that her resolution was the same as that of her predecessor, and that the interests of Holland and England were identical and equally important to her.

The States of Holland decided to stand by their resolution, for now that there was no Stadtholder, Holland was, to use a modern phrase, the empire state of the United Provinces. They persuaded the States-General, who were summoned for deliberation, to accept the same policy and to repudiate all the offers of Louis. On May 15, 1702, Great Britain, Germany, and Holland, issued the declaration of war, the plea being the ambition and bad faith of Louis. The attitude of the French king showed how deeply he was

disappointed at the resolution taken by Holland. He took no offence at the attitude of Great Britain and Germany; but said, "Messieurs, the Dutch merchants, will repent for having provoked so great a king as I am."

I have dwelt at length on these particulars, because the decision come to in the spring of 1702 was so momentous in the future fortunes of the Dutch Republic. They were drawn into the European system, and no effort which they made afterwards sufficed to draw them out of it. In this unequal struggle they were finally exhausted, though it must be allowed that other faults of government or policy contributed to this result.

The war resolved on, the question was, who should be commander. Rumour was busy. At one time it was the Landgrave of Hesse. Soon afterwards a story was afloat that Queen Anne had recommended her husband, George of Denmark. It was probably an idle guess. Silly as Anne was, she must have known that her husband was the most incompetent fool in Christendom. Charles the Second had described him and his faculties with some pleasantry. The States-General soon put an end to all rumours by appointing Marlborough. Unhappily the English allowed the Queen to put her husband at the head of the navy, in the capacity of Lord High Admiral. More than once the stupid servility of the English people has put in jeopardy the most important interests, by committing them into the hands of royal fools. The mismanagement of George of Denmark had a very disastrous effect on the early naval operations of the allies.

Marlborough was the son of a poor country knight. He came to the Court of Charles the Second with many personal graces and great natural gifts. He had improved his natural abilities in the art of war by serving under the great Turenne. He had improved his fortunes by his intimacy with the shameless and rapacious Barbara Villiers, Lady Castlemaine, the king's mistress, and his position by marrying Sarah Jennings, the favourite and arrogant waiting woman of Princess Anne. His interest was further served by the fact that his sister, Arabella Churchill, was the mistress of James, Duke of York, and the mother of the famous Duke of Berwick, one of the last great generals in the service of Louis, a person whose attachment to his father, and his father's benefactor, was constant and devoted. Berwick was not only a person of great abilities, but of high character.

It was impossible for John Churchill, with these recommendations, natural, acquired, and incidental, to fail of making his way at Court. He was soon ennobled, and on the accession of James he was trusted. He deserted his master at a crisis, he persuaded the king's daughter to desert her father with him, and he passed over to the service of William. He exhibited his great military abilities under the Dutch king, but soon fell into disgrace, for with him treachery and intrigue were a passion. As long as Mary lived he was a traitor, as soon as she died he became loyal to the English Revolution, for the succession of Anne was now assured, and he ruled Anne through his wife. His fidelity at last squared with his interest, and he remained consistently loyal to the

latter. I do not find so much fault with Churchill, when I think of his associations, and of the expedients which he was obliged to adopt in order to save his interests. It is very difficult, perhaps impossible, to discover any public man who lived through the vile age of the English Restoration, and under the influences of the Court, who was not thoroughly tainted by the atmosphere which he breathed. But I am disposed to believe that historians would have been more kindly to his faults had it not been for the family which he founded.

Churchill was avaricious beyond experience, and was seconded in his passion for money-getting by his wife. But in military skill he was far in advance of his age, some say of all men. He never lost his head, his temper, or his judgment. His conception of a campaign was faultless, his interpretation of a field of battle perfect. He never made a mistake in the art of war, never gave a chance to an enemy, never failed in a plan, never lost a battle. When he was thwarted by the Dutch deputies, who would be wiser than he was, and could not be expected to anticipate when we now know, he was as deferential to the States as Maurice had been in his better days, and with less reason, for he soon put Louis in such a position as destroyed the reputation of his military system in Europe. He first saved Germany, he then saved Holland, and he might, had time been given him, have brought Louis on his knees before Europe. But for the Dutch deputies, he might have finished the war within a year of its commencement; and again in 1705, for willing as he was to prolong the war, which was

filling his pockets, he had the truest instincts of a soldier, which was that the best wars are short wars. But though he was thwarted, his temper was placid, almost angelic. He yielded to them with the greatest grace, and continued, as the custom was, to receive his percentages on their and the British expenditure. He even conceded more than was reasonable to the beggarly German princes, perhaps winked at their embezzling English and Dutch money, of course minus his percentage, and graciously accepted a German patent of nobility. But the tension of his life was too great, and before he reached old age he became imbecile.

There was of course an awkwardness which was inherent in the hostilities which the Dutch, the English, and the Germans commenced. The object of the allies was to secure the Spanish throne and the Spanish dominions to the son of the emperor. But they could do this only by subduing the strongholds of the actual king of Spain, and by ravaging or otherwise injuring what they alleged to be the rightful inheritance of his rival. On the other hand, Louis could act on the defensive in Spain and Holland, and on the offensive in Germany, particularly in the South, where the Elector of Bavaria was his ally, and for a considerable time, his only ally. It was therefore (the rear being efficiently protected by the capture or occupations of sufficient forts) advisable at an early date to try conclusions with the armies of Louis in Germany.

In the first of his campaigns, Marlborough got possession of several fortresses on the Flemish frontier which were of great advantage to him in strengthening

TOWN-HALL, HAARLEM.

the base of his operations. But the English Parliament insisted that the Dutch should cease to trade with France and Spain as a condition of their furnishing the allies with an additional 10,000 troops, and the Dutch, though sorely against their will, yielded, but as I suspect not very cordially, and not very thoroughly. Then the English fleet captured or destroyed the Spanish treasure fleet in Vigo Bay, a loss which greatly fell on the Dutch, as the treasure had been already assigned to them in payment of debts incurred. But so enthusiastic were they, that the States of Holland alone voted nine million guilders for the war.

In 1703 Marlborough reduced Bonn, and other places on the Rhine or near it, and would have joined battle with Villeroi, but the Dutch deputies forbad it, on the ground that if the combat was unsuccessful to the allies, Holland would be exposed to a French invasion. It was in this year that Louis had to take active measures against the Camisards of Languedoc.

In 1704, Marlborough marched into the Black Forest, and won the great battle of Blenheim or Hochstadt, over Tallard. The French army was entirely destroyed or captured, Germany was liberated from French troops, and Bavaria was occupied by the others. In the meantime the archduke Charles, son of the emperor, and Austrian claimant of the Spanish crown, came to England, passed over to Portugal, and was welcomed by some of the Spaniards, especially the Catalans. In this year Rooke and the Prince of Darmstadt captured the rock of Gibraltar, a fortress which the English have held ever since, against frequent and desperate sieges.

Early in 1705, the emperor died, and was succeeded by his eldest son Joseph. Villars continued to evade a battle with Marlborough, and later on, when the English general was opposed to Villeroi and could have constrained him to fight, the Dutch deputies again interposed with the plea that the risk was too great. Here, as I have already stated, the patience and address of Marlborough so won on the Dutch that thenceforward they determined to rely on his judgment. In Spain, the forces of Philip were demoralized by the unsuccessful attack on Gibraltar. In the north of that kingdom, Barcelona was captured by the eccentric Lord Peterborough, and the whole of Catalonia and Valentia declared for Charles.

In 1706, early in the year, Marlborough won the battle of Ramillies, over the French general Villeroi. The effect of this victory was the total evacuation of the Low Countries by the French. In September, another French army was destroyed near Turin, and Madrid was occupied by Charles, and for a time Spain seemed to be lost to the French prince. It seemed as though everything was against Louis, his people were oppressed with taxation, the currency was debased, and the French king was constrained to have recourse to an inconvertible paper. He was now sincerely anxious for peace, but the Allies deemed that no peace would be secure, unless France was thoroughly humiliated. There was no reason to believe that Holland wished to continued a struggle which was so exhausting, but the bad faith of Louis had been so conspicuous, that the Dutch naturally resolved that they would have solid guarantees for the future.

Up to this time Louis and his grandson had experienced nothing but reverses, the allies and their *protégé* Charles, had experienced constant success. But in Spain the tide began to turn. Spaniards have not infrequently been defeated in pitched battles, but it has always been hard to permanently occupy the country, for it and its inhabitants were singularly suitable for guerilla warfare. It took the Romans a longer time to conquer Spain than it did any other country outside Italy, and tasked the abilities of their most competent generals. Now Charles was not only deficient in courage and daring, but he had come into Spain by the help of a foreign army, while the success of the allies foreshadowed the partition of the Spanish Empire. On April 25th, Berwick, the English exile, joined battle at Almanza with Galway, the French exile, and completely routed him. This was practically the ruin of the Austrian prince.

In 1708 Louis attempted to make a diversion by sending James to Scotland. But as James, called by the English the old Pretender, was at Dunkirk, he was seized with illness, the project got wind, and the port was blockaded by Byng. Louis saw that without Dutch and British subsidies, not one of the other allies could move, and he imagined that the Scotch, with some of whom the act of Union was distasteful, would rise in revolt against the English Government. In July Vendôme lost the battle of Oudenard, and the affairs of Louis became desperate. He feared that he should have to abandon his grandson's cause. Added to the calamities of war, there came two excessively unproductive harvests in succession, which seem to have

been even more disastrous in France than they even were in England.

In 1709 Louis renewed his negotiations for peace, but with their successes the claims of the allies became more exacting. The French king was not only to abandon his grandson, but to abandon the frontier which he had created, and be content with that which had been given to France by the treaty of Westphalia. Louis appealed to his people, collected a fresh army, and the French, under Villars, fought the fourth great battle at Malplaquet. It was lost, and Louis again had recourse to negotiations. But the demands of the allies increased, they now insisted that Louis should dethrone his grandson by force.

In 1710 both parties were exhausted, though the allies took several towns on the French frontier, and Marlborough certainly intended to make his next campaign in France itself. Meanwhile, Spain was again lost and won. In July and August Philip was defeated in two battles and fled from Madrid. In December Vendôme drove Charles and his allies from Castile, captured the army at Brihuega, and won a battle at Villaviciosa. Meanwhile, a great change was coming over English opinion. The Tories gained a majority in both houses, at the end of the year, and determined to displace Marlborough and bring about a peace.

The long continuance of the war, the sufferings of the people, and the added calamity of the two years' famine had developed a peculiarly malignant kind of smallpox. It frequently happens after very destructive and protracted wars, that the world, even that part of

it which has taken no part in the struggle, is afflicted with new and fatal pestilences. In 1711 death was busy. Louis of France lost from his own family the Dauphin, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, his great grandson and his brother, all from the same disease. In the same year it was fatal to the Emperor Joseph, and the titular King of Spain became Emperor of Germany. There remained only one infant two years old, between Philip of Spain and the throne of France, and if effect was to be given to the purposes of the allies, Germany and Spain were to be again united as they had been under Charles the Fifth.

In effect the smallpox brought the war of the Spanish succession to an end. As I have said, had Marlborough been continued in his command, he would have certainly invaded France, and have enforced as far as the French frontier was concerned, the proposals which Louis rejected in 1709. But the Tories were resolved to recall Marlborough. His wife had been supplanted in the Queen's favour by her own waiting woman, and it is probable that Anne and her advisers had planned to restore the Pretender Ormond was sent to supersede Marlborough, and was soon instructed to become inactive. The emperor and the German princes were furious; they had been long used to English subsidies. But the new Government answered with some show of reason that Germany and Spain united were as a great violation of the balance of power, as Spain and France united could be, and that it was the interest of Europe that the government of the three countries should be and

always remain distinct. The object of Europe then was to extort a renunciation of the kingdom of France from Philip, a renunciation of the kingdom of Spain from the French princes.

On April 11, 1713, the treaty of Utrecht was signed. It embraced Great Britain, Holland, Prussia, and Savoy. But the emperor stood aloof from it, and continued the war with France alone. Some losses which he suffered at the hands of Villars, and were inevitable, when he had his own resources only to depend on soon brought him to reason, and the peace of Rastadt was signed on March, 1714. The most scandalous act in connection with this peace, was the abandonment of the Catalans to the vengeance of France and Spain. The allies had incited the revolt of these northern Spaniards, had supplied them with foreign forces, and had now deserted them.

In this famous peace France agreed to recognize the Hanoverian succession, to demolish Dunkirk, and to cede its American possessions on the north-east of the Plantations. It yielded the Low Countries to Holland, to hold as trustees till peace was concluded with the emperor, the revenue, derivable from them, being secured to the Elector of Bavaria till such time as his hereditary dominions were restored to him. It engaged to admit Dutch garrisons into eleven frontier towns, a million florins being paid annually from the Netherland revenues for the purpose of maintaining this garrison. The Duke of Savoy had an enlargement of territory, and the Elector of Brandenburg was recognized as the King of Prussia with certain rectifications of frontier. Besides

these general engagements Spain yielded to England, Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and the island of Minorca, with a regulated share under the Assiento treaty in the slave trade, for the Spanish conquerors of the New World had exhausted the natives by compulsory labour in the mines, and had introduced negro slaves into America in order to fill up the void.

XXXIV.

THE INTERNAL TROUBLES OF THE REPUBLIC.

As far as the words of treaties went, the position of Holland after the War of the Spanish Succession was over was rendered satisfactory. The Dutch were guaranteed the full liberty of trading with Spain which they had enjoyed before the war was undertaken, and were permitted to enjoy the privileges of French subjects, especially in the Mediterranean ports of France. The Dutch were a little alarmed at the cession of a part of the frontier to the new King of Prussia in exchange for the principality of Orange, near Avignon, which Frederic William claimed as the representative of the house of Orange.

There were, however, serious results from the war. This struggle had been costly beyond experience, and the wealth of Holland had been seriously lessened, and its future industry pledged by the subsidies which it had granted, the expenses it had incurred, and the loans which it had raised. Dutch credit was, and remained, good long after the period of which I am writing. The State could borrow from its thrifty

citizens on better terms than other governments could, and though the interest laid on Dutch stock was low, foreigners invested in a security the dividends of which were always punctually paid. But the prosperity of Holland depended on its supremacy in trade, and here the rivalry of England, a country with far greater resources, and in a far more safe position, was sure to affect the activity of the Republic. Besides, the English were beginning to secure that place in manufacturing industry which they have long and successfully occupied, and to supplant the Hollander. Not many years after the War of the Spanish Succession was over, the rate of interest in England was nearly as low as it was in Holland.

The debt of Holland was very heavy for the times. The State of Holland alone, the largest of the United Provinces, had a debt of nineteen millions of guilders, and the collective debt of the United Provinces was nearly ten times that amount. At the beginning of the eighteenth century such a debt filled statesmen with alarm, and not only in Holland, but in England, the state of the finances made people fear that a collapse of public credit was inevitable. To obviate such alarms, redoubled efforts were needed, and more energetic rivalry practised, in which it was hard for the weaker nation to make head against the stronger, even if the relations between the two countries, Holland and England, had been maintained with perfect fairness. But, in truth, the English Government used Holland very ill, dictating to the United Provinces what should be their form of government, forcing on the reluctant Republic monarchical or quasi-

monarchical forms, entrapping Holland into taking part in the continental policy of England, and encouraging its own merchants to supplant the Dutch in their own domain of trade.

The Dutch indeed welcomed the accession of the house of Hanover with enthusiasm. They saw that the party which had thwarted them in the late war was driven from power and discredited, and they felt assured that George, the new English king, would be their friend. They even lamented that the life of Anne was prolonged, so that the surrender, as they deemed it, of Utrecht had been effected, and that they reaped but little advantage from their sacrifices. They gave considerable assistance to George at the Scottish insurrection of 1715, which perhaps prevented a renewal of hostilities on the Continent.

The long reign of Louis XIV. came to an end in September, 1715. His successor was a child of six years old, and the regency was in the hands of the Duke of Orleans. Now this person, a very scandalous and profligate man, was strongly convinced that his own interests and the interests of France required that the relations between France and England should be as amicable as possible. Hence as the same counsels prevailed in England, peace was maintained in Europe for a considerable time, and there seemed every prospect that there would be nothing but peaceful rivalry among the nations.

They who have studied the history of Holland trace the decline of the nation to the events which followed on the War of the Spanish Succession. The old spirit had, they say, been exhausted in the Republic.

The Dutch were no longer disposed to emulate the military endurance of their forefathers, such as it had been during the greater part of the seventeenth century, or the heroism on sea of Heemskerk, Tromp, and De Ruyter. A nation of heroes had been turned, it was alleged, into a nation of pedlars. The general assembly of the States in 1716, they allege, proved that Dutch courage and enterprise had wofully declined, and that Holland was soon to forfeit the exalted reputation she had acquired. And yet for two generations and more after this event, commercial Holland was the envy and admiration of other European nations, and the causes of Dutch prosperity were carefully and perhaps invidiously examined.

A BROEK GIRL.

The constitution of the Republic was, and always had been, one of the most unmanageable conceivable. The several States constituting the United Provinces were all free and all equal. The theory of what Americans call, or used to call, State rights was pushed to extreme lengths, and nothing but a common interest in resisting a common danger could have preserved unity of action among the separate members. The Republic was, in fact, a loosely united association, the several contingents of which acted separately for many purposes, and in common for two objects only

—political safety and trade. The contribution which each should make to the common expenses of government was a matter of arrangement, but the several States were not always ready to abide by the compact, and often threatened to stand aloof at a crisis. It is remarkable that so flimsy a union should have held together at all, and it is not strange that the most vigorous and successful of the stadtholders desired nothing so much as the opportunity of arresting these tendencies to disintegration which were always vexatious and sometimes threatening.

Generally the progress of the Stadtholder was from the influence which he acquired in the lesser States to the maintenance of his authority over the larger, especially Holland, and he often found it or thought it necessary to put down popular institutions in the smaller States in order to prepare himself for a struggle with the elements of resistance in the larger. For during the struggle between the monarchical influence of the Stadtholder and the distrust and resistance of the republicans, the mass of the people were generally on the side of the house of Orange, while the principal burghers and merchants formed the strength of the Republican party. Unlike what has happened in other countries, the populace was on the side of monarchy, that which was practically the aristocracy, on that of democratic government.

By far the largest part of the wealth and power of the United Provinces was centred in the State of Holland, and in the city of Amsterdam. Important as the success of the movement would be to the fortunes of the Republic, William found the greatest

difficulty in winning the assent of the Amsterdam burghers to the expedition of 1688. After the death of William, and the re-establishment of the Republic without a Stadtholder, the State of Holland took the lead in the conduct of affairs; and till 1720, when he died, Heinsius, the friend of William, and the Pensionary, was practically the ruler of the Provinces from 1689. But though the State of Holland had made great sacrifices, the smaller States were jealous of it, and were untiring in their efforts to break down its supremacy. The best way in which this could be done was to restore the Stadtholder.

Now at William's death he recognized as his heir one John William Friso, the Stadtholder of Friesland and Groningen, and these two States proposed that their Stadtholder should be appointed general of the infantry in 1704, though he was still very young. But his claims to represent the house of Orange was contested by the Brandenburg family, who afterwards became kings of Prussia, and though the Provinces at last agreed that John William should be a general of the Dutch army, the State of Holland proposed, and apparently succeeded in their contention, that all the provinces should take oath that they would preserve the union without a Stadtholder. In 1711 John William was drowned, and a posthumous son of his, William Charles Henry, was born. Under these circumstances, the rights of this branch of the house of Orange being disputed, and one of the competitors being an infant, the question of the stadtholderate slept. The claims of the king of Prussia were indirectly, but practically, surrendered at the treaty of Utrecht.

In 1722 the partisans of the boy, now eleven years old, urged that he should be elected Stadtholder of the United Provinces, with the object, as I have suggested, of breaking down the supremacy of Holland, and especially of Amsterdam. But the attempt was premature, and William was for some time merely Stadtholder of Guelderland, and with very limited powers. There was, however, no doubt that most of the European monarchs were sincerely anxious that the Dutch Republic should have an hereditary chief. The success and opulence of free institutions was distasteful in their eyes, and it was pretty obvious that if Holland could have a monarch thrust on them, and be entangled in the European system, the menace of a free government wedged in between two absolute monarchies would soon cease to be a danger.

Shortly after the treaties of Utrecht and Rastadt, by which what had formerly been the Spanish Netherlands came into the possession of the house of Austria, the emperor, Charles VI., once the pretender to the Spanish crown, granted commissions to Ostend traders, empowering them to carry on commerce with the East Indies. These commissions were eagerly accepted by private individuals, both in England and Holland, who under the name of interlopers, strove to appropriate a portion of the trade which had hitherto been the monopoly under State guarantees of the Dutch and English companies. These companies had, at great expense, built factories, established relations with native powers, and acquired a trade, and it seemed not a little unjust that traders who had incurred no such expense, should reap the fruits of

other people's labours. Remonstrances addressed to Charles were of no avail, the grievance and the loss continued, the English Government forbade English subjects from accepting commissions from a foreign Power for trading to the East Indies, and the Dutch adopted similar measures. In 1722 Charles of Austria went further. He granted a charter of incorporation to the Ostend East India Company, with a capital of six million florins, and the trade of Holland and England is said to have been seriously compromised.

Now this proceeding was denounced by the United Provinces as a plain infraction of the provisions contained in the treaty of Munster, under which the King of Spain bound himself that none of his subjects should sail from Europe to India, and that as the emperor had succeeded to the King of Spain in the Netherlands and Southern Italy, he was bound by the conditions under which his predecessor was limited. The English argued, that by the treaty of Madrid in 1670, their merchants were admitted to all the advantages which the Dutch enjoyed under the treaty of Munster, and that the English Government was justified in suppressing this trade. They followed up their remonstrance by an Act of Parliament, under which serious pecuniary penalties were to be levied on all British subjects who subscribed to the Ostend Company, and such persons as were detected in India without the license of the English Company were made liable to imprisonment and corporal chastisement at the discretion of the East India Company's authorities.

These severe restraints of trade in the interests of a monopoly granted by the state are interesting as they indicate what was, in the opinion of the age, the safest and most continuous source of national wealth. But, in the end, the English East India Company paid its dividends out of its conquests and lost by its trade, and the ruin of the Bank of Amsterdam was effected by the loans which it made to the Dutch East India Company, whose trade was conducted on even more vicious and costly principles than that of its English rival was. The Dutch conquests and the administration of its territory in the last did indeed supply Holland a revenue and does so still. The career of the two companies has been similar.

After an existence of nine years the Ostend Company was abolished, not because Charles acknowledged that in creating it he had violated the treaty law of Europe, but because he wished to get the assent of the various European Powers to the Pragmatic Sanction, under which the inheritance of his German dominions was to be secured to his only daughter, Maria Theresa, and, as he fondly hoped, the German Empire to her husband. The historian of Holland is forced to admit that in their eagerness to get rid of a rival, the Dutch allowed themselves to be again involved in European dynastic complications in which they had no interest, and that the gain was not worth the risk.

Between 1718 and 1720 France and England were the scene of the wildest speculation, and the unaccountable madness of the trading classes in the two kingdoms has been the natural object of comment

by all those who have treated of the facts. The proximate cause of this speculation was the attempts of the several governments to relieve themselves in part from the annual burden caused by the dynastic wars in which Europe had been engaged. The Dutch had laid a tax of the hundredth penny on their own public funds (although it was alleged that this was only a disguised repudiation) for three years. The Regent of France began by debasing the currency, then commenced the issue of paper money, then intrusted his bank to Law, who became a Papist in order to secure the public confidence, and finally issued unlimited paper on the security of the Mississipi project. The collapse and ruin of this project did not deter Englishmen from a similar madness. The South Sea Company had procured the contract for the importation of negroes into America, and had guaranteed the conversion of certain 6 per cent. Government stocks into a 5 per cent. The success of this expedient, in which the Company's intervention was found unnecessary, induced the Government to attempt the conversion of all the public stock into joint stock capital. The directors of the Company took it, puffed it, profited by it, and the thing collapsed. There was no public frenzy in Holland, but many Dutchmen ventured on Law's scheme and the South Sea project, and suffered accordingly.

In 1729, after a vain attempt two years before to capture Gibraltar, the treaty of Madrid was concluded between Great Britain, France, and Spain as considerable Powers, with the object of maintaining, by force if necessary, the provisions of the treaty of

Utrecht. To this treaty the States-General were invited to give their assent, to which they agreed. Under the stipulations of the treaty, the States-General were to keep on foot a very moderate force for the guarantee, were to obtain the entire abolition of the Ostend Company, full compensation for all their losses and grievances, and commercial privileges on the most favoured nation principle. In the same year the Dutch East India Company was continued for twenty-one years, on payment of three and a half million guilders to the States treasury.

Amsterdam was still the centre of European trade and exchange, and its bank was still the object of admiration and envy. The growth of the English mercantile marine necessitated the payment of large sums through Amsterdam. The corn trade was by the tradition of Dutch commerce centered in Amsterdam. Dealings in public funds had become a recognized branch of investment and speculation, and transactions in these securities were generally carried out at Amsterdam, to whose bank remittances due for interest were sent. The English Government of the day, whose policy was vigorously attacked, though later times have borne testimony to the financial abilities and pacific policy of Walpole, was obliged to give its reasons for the fact that the exchange was generally against England and in favour of Holland. It was still the great trading mart of the world.

The fire of religious persecution was not yet extinct. The Protestants of Savoy were still being harried, and the Archbishop of Salzburg, one of the

German prince bishops, was enforcing the gospel by fire and sword against his subjects and spiritual sons. Secure in his castle built on the great rock which dominates the whole valley in which this town lies, the prince prelate enforced his spiritual counsel by occasional cannonades, and by a torture chamber duly furnished in the stronghold. Naturally enough, the Savoyards and Salzburgers fled, and Holland welcomed them. The former could not, however, like most people of the mountains, bear the flats, the canals, and dykes of Holland, and returned, preferring the risks of persecution. Meantime, Benedict XIII. put out a service in honour of Gregory VII., and his excommunication of Henry IV., Emperor of Germany. The Dutch, now entirely tolerant, forbade the reading of this service within the States, and in order to check Jesuit intrigues, to which the rite was undoubtedly due, encouraged the settlement of a Jansenist archbishop at Utrecht. This church still subsists.

SLEIGH.

But a greater danger than the Jesuits and the Bull unigenitus, which they had got from the Pope, was threatening Holland. In 1732 it was found that the ships from the East had carried with them a curious shell fish, which has a habit of boring into wood and

even into stone of moderate hardness. The Pholas has a shell which is armed with a saw, by which it is able to carve out a habitation for itself, and effectually destroy the timber or stone in which it carves. It had attacked the timbers on which the dykes of Amsterdam, and indeed of Holland, depended for their very existence, and threatened to do what Alva, and Parma, and Spinola, and Louis could not effect. It was discovered in good time, and the dykes were strengthened with flint and granite, materials too hard for the jaws or the shells of the Pholas. But the consternation which Holland experienced in 1732, was as great as that of sixty years before, and was as happily averted, though not at such a cost.

The Republic had to fight against the constant risks of the angry sea, against shell fish which its own trade had unwittingly imported, against the greedy monarchs of Spain and France, against the jealous merchants of England, against the intrigues of the kings with whom the Orange family had allied itself, kings who had strong family feelings against the people who have permitted them to rule. For the European kings have never scrupled to despoil each other, and are always ready to unite together, in order to oppress those who would keep them in check, or resent their tyranny. And now came the beginning of the end. Holland, despite its heroic efforts after freedom, despite the wise self-denial of William the Silent, and the hesitation of Maurice, was to be handed over to hereditary monarchy, and the vulgarities it implies.

In earlier days the sympathy of the poorer Dutch-

men with the house of Orange was partly hereditary gratitude, partly disgust at the arrogance of the mercantile and manufacturing oligarchy of the towns. It is an inherent vice with most of those who raise themselves in life, that they are more harsh and severe to the class from which they have sprung than those are who have been born and brought up in more affluent circumstances. Set a capitalist who has been a labourer over workmen, and he is the most intolerant of employers, as a rule. And it is plain that Dutchmen, who had become rich out of nothing, became sharp to the ordinary burgher. The evidence is clear enough, though I cannot tell it here, for lack of space.

In 1733 the Prince of Orange married Anne, the eldest daughter of George the Second of England. There was no doubt that there was many an honest Dutchwoman who said on this occasion, as a Scotchwoman of Argyleshire is reported to have said not long ago, on the occasion of a similar marriage—"Ah! the Queen of England must be a proud woman to day when she has married her daughter to our prince." The States-General remonstrated, hinted that they ought to be consulted when one of their principal subjects marries into a foreign royal house, were snubbed for their pains, were assured that the English monarch would protect the integrity of Holland, and had to acquiesce. They foresaw that they would be entangled in those German interests which, with the English King George the Second, were far more important than those of the country which had adopted him, and had raised him from a petty German potentate to one of the first thrones in Europe. If

George cared very little for England when Hanover was concerned, he was pretty sure to care even less for Holland. But the Republic which had committed the error of giving a guarantee, in order to get rid of the Ostend Company, soon found they had gone too far to recede.

WINDMILLS, ZAANDAM.

XXXV.

DOWN HILL.

THE Dutch, as my reader remembers, had won their freedom from Spain. At one time there was good reason to believe that they would have won, with their own, the freedom of the whole of those Netherlands, which had been, less than three centuries before, the collective inheritance of the house of Burgundy. Had the life of William the Silent been prolonged, it might have been the case that this great result would have happened, and that the first industrial Power in Europe would have been a series of federated republics and cities, in which true principles of government and a just regard for all national interests would have been maintained. Now I think there are few less profitable speculations than a discussion as to what would have happened had the life of this or that public man been prolonged. William was murdered by a hired assassin; but even before this crime was committed, the inveterate vice of the Netherlands—mutual jealousy and the want of political cohesion—left them an easy prey to the great and wicked men

whom Philip sent against them. The Council of Blood destroyed all aspirants after national liberty, and all who were suspected of any leaning towards the Reformed faith. It is a mistake to say that persecution will not destroy a creed. If it be quite systematic and entirely unscrupulous it can utterly extinguish a creed. It did so with Protestantism in Flanders, France, Spain, Austria, and Bohemia. It did so with the Roman religion in Sweden, in Denmark, in much of North Germany. The Dutch and the Flemish nations were severed by the Inquisition, and the arts of diplomacy have been unable to unite them.

Now there are three European nations which have always been at variance, at least as long as one of them was in fighting trim, and since that time the remaining two have been perpetually quarrelling. The three were France, Spain, and the German Empire, the last for a time identified with the house of Austria, and within our own experience with that of Prussia. For a long time the struggle was principally between France and Spain, till, in the end, Spain was entirely exhausted, and became of little account in the councils of Europe. Then all the efforts of France, and all the military purposes of her kings and rulers, were devoted towards crippling the house of Austria. Later on, and quite recently, France tried conclusions with a new German power, and was considerably surprised at the result. It is not easy to say whether, in these later days, her old passion for an enlarged frontier has passed away, and she is prepared to accept the present situation.

Now it will be remembered that at the Treaty of Utrecht, which purported to go on the same lines with the famous Peace of Munster or Westphalia, the boundaries of the several European states were generally settled. Some changes, to be sure, were made, one of which was of great significance to Holland. The Spanish Netherlands were transferred to Austria, and a country which France always eagerly coveted was given to a sovereign who had enough to do to hold his own in Germany, and would find it difficult to defend his new acquisition. France had already, as the Dutch too well knew, got a foothold in the Netherlands by the acquisition of Dunkirk, and had winked at or encouraged its becoming a nest of pirates. The demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk was a capital point in the negotiations for a peace. The Dutch were supposed to be defended by a series of forts in Flemish territory, called barrier towns, which they garrisoned. But on the west, for all this, they had the French nation, always eager to extend its frontier on the east, at the expense of Austria, and on the east they had the Prussian kingdom, which at a time, when the opinion was current that kings succeeded by inheritance to nations, just as though they were cows or sheep, claimed in a vague way the succession to the Stadtholder's office, though for a time the Prussian ruler had been put off with a compensation.

Now the Emperor of Germany, of the house of Austria, Charles VI., was the person on whose behalf the English and Dutch had waged the war of the Spanish succession from the year 1702 till the year

1713. In 1711 he became Emperor of Germany on the unexpected death of his brother Joseph, who left behind him daughters, his only son having died. Charles had a son who died young, and a daughter, Maria Theresa, who married Francis of Lorraine and afterwards of Tuscany. Every effort was made by the emperor to get the various European Powers to acknowledge what goes in history by the name of the Pragmatic Sanction, a decree of the emperor under which the Austrian inheritance was declared to descend to the females of his line. One by one, and for this or that reason, the several Powers agreed to abide by this new line of succession, the commonest plea, one by the way which the French Government put prominently forward, being that such a line of policy would preserve that balance of power in Europe, which it was the object of the great treaties to affirm and maintain.

Among the nations which agreed to accept and support the Pragmatic Sanction was the Dutch. Charles, as I have already said, approached them on their weak side, the Ostend Company, and agreed to suppress it, as the price of their acquiescence in his favourite project. Here then were the Hollanders, who had been successfully resisting the dynastic claims of the house of Orange against themselves, agreeing to a new departure in Germany, and willing to risk their lives, their trade, and their wealth in a family arrangement from which they could get no possible benefit whatever. It is not, I think, too much to say, that had the Dutch stood entirely aloof in the war of the Austrian succession, and not suf-

fered themselves to be embroiled in it, the Republic would have been saved, and though it might not have been possible to have resisted revolutionary France, it would not have collapsed so ignominiously as it did. During the disputes about the slave trade with the Spanish colonies, Holland had contrived to preserve her neutrality, though Dutch interests were so universal that no two nations could quarrel without Amsterdam suffering some heavy pecuniary loss.

One of the German princes, the Elector of Bavaria, had persistently refused to accept the Pragmatic Sanction. He had some reason on his side, for he had married a daughter of the Emperor Joseph, elder brother of Charles VI., and if female claims were to be admitted, had, from a modern point of view, a better claim than his wife's cousin possessed. He became emperor under the title of Charles VII., but only reigned three years. Charles VI. died in October 1740, and his successor was elected two years afterwards.

Now every one who has read German history, and in particular that of the house of Prussia, knows that just about the time that Charles VI. died there succeeded to the Prussian throne a king who is called Frederic the Great, perhaps because he broke his word about the succession of Maria Theresa, and took advantage of her defenceless condition to lay waste and annex part of her dominions. The story of how gallantly the Queen of Hungary defended herself, and how Frederic had to suffer a good many reverses before he could actually get secure possession of what

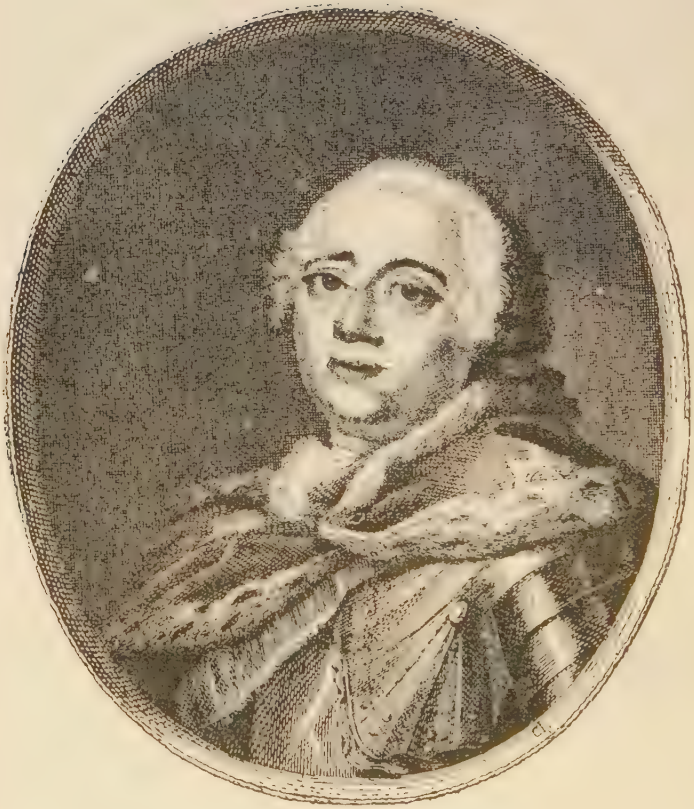
he coveted, is told in the histories, and does not concern us. Holland, which had a good deal to lose and nothing to gain, kept its word, however unwisely it was given ; and agreed to find the queen a force of 20,000 men, though some of the States remonstrated, because the Austrian Government had not extinguished the Ostend Company. But Holland was dragged into the struggle, and in the end suffered more than any of the combatants, for she lost her liberty, surrendering it to an hereditary stadtholder, and came out of the war simply crippled by debt.

The King of England eagerly took the part of the Austrian queen. The French Government took the side of the King of Prussia. But the war was one of cross purposes. England engaged with France, but did not attack Prussia, and Maria Theresa fought against Bavaria and Prussia. The English won the battle of Dettingen, and the French supplied Charles Edward, known as the young Pretender, with means for invading England. Then when Charles VII. died at the beginning of the year 1745, and the husband of Maria Theresa was elected emperor, a peace was patched up with Prussia, and England and Holland were left to carry on the war with France. The war was transferred to the Netherlands, and one after the other the French army captured the Flemish towns. In May, 1745, occurred the battle of Fontenoy, in which the French gained a victory, and the Dutch suffered severely. Loss soon followed upon loss, and the Dutch became eager for peace, the more so as the original reason for which war was undertaken had

ceased to operate, since the Queen of Hungary had become Empress of Germany. But though the Dutch desired peace the English desired war, and George of England wished to thrust his son-in-law into an hereditary position. In 1747 Holland was invaded, and scenes like those of 1672 was threatened. The Orange party, always most active in the midst of national disaster, insisted on William IV. being made Stadtholder. Zeland proclaimed him, and soon the whole seven provinces elected him. Advantage was taken of the situation to proposé that his office should be made hereditary, and this proposal was accepted.

Holland now ceased to be a republic in anything but name. The States were still High Mightinesses, and, as far as phrases went, were still the powers which had carried the little State through all her perils, and made her friendship of account at every European Court. But all the real power which the magistrates wielded was taken away, and transferred to the Stadtholder, who with the functions of royalty, took upon him no little of its state and emblems. The debt and taxation of Holland were enormous and crushing. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed in October, 1748, and Holland was left exhausted. The Dutch Republic was at an end.

To my mind the struggle of the Hollanders for their liberties is as instructive, as heroic, and as important as that of Athens against Persia, and was vastly more prolonged. The issue of the strife was of the most profound significance to Europe. It suc-



WILLIAM IV.

cessfully contravened the divine right of kings, and as successfully vindicated the principle that the creed of a nation, and next of individuals, is a matter of their own choice and their own conscience. To me, whenever I visit it, the Square of the Binnenhof at the Hague is the holiest spot in modern Europe, for here the great deliverance was wrought out. But there still remains the sequel of the story, which must be briefly told.

XXXVI.

HOLLAND TO THE TIME OF THE ARMED NEUTRALITY.

PERHAPS, if the life of William IV. had been prolonged, mischievously subject as Holland became to British policy during the war which was concluded by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, the country, though it would have necessarily fallen far behind its ancient vigour and reputation, might have to a large extent recovered. William IV., though a very ordinary person, and invested with powers which he speedily extended, such as those of chief director and governor of the East and West India Companies, was sincerely anxious to promote or restore the prosperity of his country, and had at least the wisdom to know that the show of arbitrary power was more dangerous than the possession of it. Nor was William, raised to office at the conclusion of one war, anxious to consolidate his authority by sacrificing the interests of Holland and provoking another war. Hence the memory of William IV. is respected in Holland to a degree which neither the length of his

reign, nor the capacity which he exhibited at all justify. He died in 1751, at the age of forty, after he had held his office, now made hereditary, for only four years. He left an only son, afterwards William V., then only three years old, and a daughter. His widow, Anne of England, became regent under the title of Governess, and the Duke of Brunswick was continued as commander-in-chief, an office conferred on him by William IV. when his own health was breaking. Perhaps the misfortunes and miseries of the next epoch have been a benefit to the memory of William IV.

Of course, Anne of England, the Governess, during the time that she lived and had the management of affairs, did her very best to make the hereditary stadtholderate an irrevocable situation, and, indeed, the Dutch, once high-spirited and jealous of their liberties, seem to have vied with nations, in which servility is a tradition, in fulsome adulation of the house of Orange and the young prince. One of her projects, in which she succeeded after some opposition, was to make the councils in the towns the nominees of the Orange party. She died in January, 1759, when her son was eleven years old, and at the time of her death was deservedly distrusted and disliked. The cause of this feeling was the incessant attacks she made on what remained of the Dutch constitution, and her obvious sacrifice of Dutch to English interests during the Seven Years' War.

The object of this war was to determine which of the two countries, France or Great Britain, should succeed in obtaining a sole market in the Eastern and

Western Worlds. The contest, in brief, was for North America and India, and for some time the issue was doubtful. Now it was of no consequence whatever to Holland which side should win in the struggle, if indeed the success of either country boded any good to Dutch trade. The English envoy, Yorke, claimed a subsidy from the Dutch, and the French envoy, D'Affry, was equally positive that, according to the faith of treaties, Holland was bound to assist the French. The Governess, of course, was on the side of the English envoy. But she could not induce the States to take part in the war. All she could do was to leave Holland in as defenceless a state as possible, and to connive at the enormous injuries which British privateers inflicted on Dutch shipping.

One of the objects which the advocates of the sole-market theory had, was to destroy the commerce of their rivals. Now the English Government, which was rapidly becoming the principal, if not the only, maritime power of Europe, resolved to stop all trade with France, not only between that country and its own subjects, but between France and all other nations, defining contraband in such a way as to cover nearly all goods, and insisting on the right of search. These large powers were conferred, according to the policy of the time, on privateers, between whom and pirates there was only a metaphysical distinction. In a short time the trade of Holland was nearly ruined by these pirates, and the elder Pitt, who wished to cripple France, and drag Holland into his war, encouraged the wrong-doers. Perhaps at no time in its history were more outrageous injuries perpetrated on a

neutral nation than those which the Dutch suffered from the English during the time of the elder Pitt's administration. These privateers' crews pillaged the ships of the Dutch companies who were trading to the Dutch colonies, on the plea that they might be carrying French goods. The Peace of Paris in 1763 gave the Dutch some breathing time, but in the same year a formidable commercial panic, attended with numerous bankruptcies, occurred in Amsterdam.

The peace of 1763 virtually secured to Great Britain what she entered on the war to gain, a sole market. The French were almost entirely expelled from India, and were left a feeble power in North America. But the success of the struggle brought about the ruin of the policy which it had established. As long as the French held possession of the Mississipi, and could connect their southern and northern settlements by a chain of forts, and adequate communications, they were a natural source of alarm to the British plantations in the New World, and the necessity of British defence was a guarantee of colonial loyalty. But as soon as ever the danger was removed, the only power which the American Colonies had to fear was the British Government, and as is well-known, that government soon gave occasion for a quarrel, the outcome of which was American independence, and the overthrow of the sole-market theory. It is true that the elder Pitt was opposed to the scheme for taxing the Colonies. But the expenditure of his wars had left British finance in a desperate condition, and had made the Colonies a nation. I cannot predict, had the Stamp Act not been imposed, and the Boston

Mohawks had not been called on to resist the tea duty, how long these colonies would have acquiesced in dependence. But I am pretty sure that as soon as ever a colony can hold its own, the tie to the mother country is inevitably weak, and will bear no strain.

The time when the young Stadtholder, William V., came to his majority was eagerly welcomed. The Dutch still believed in the house of Orange, and anticipated, in their own words, that the prince would "fill the place of those immortal heroes who for two centuries," &c. He was eighteen years of age when this prophecy was uttered. Perhaps there never lived a man who more completely falsified expectations than William V. did. He was totally deficient in resolution, indeed in any character, and the faults of his nature were studiously accentuated, it was believed, by the ignorance of all public affairs in which his guardian, Louis of Brunswick, had brought him up. To this person he entirely deferred—with him he could do little, without him he could do nothing. He soon (1767) married a princess of Prussia, a woman of great ability, but entirely indifferent to Dutch interests. Subject to her and to the Duke of Brunswick, William soon merited the distrust, and finally the contempt, of the people whose great history he was to bring to so disgraceful a conclusion. Already Holland had become impotent.

Twelve years after the Peace of Paris, the War of American Independence broke out. The Stadtholder of course wanted the States to take the side of the English, and thus repudiate the very principles to which they owed their own independence. But

Holland had now accepted a hereditary sovereign, and hereditary sovereigns always constitute themselves the judges of a difference between their people and themselves. The Dutch had reversed that doctrine, and now a section of the English race was following their example. She could not therefore take the English side. In consequence, the English Government revived the old practice of piracy, under the name of privateering, made prize of Dutch ships sailing to French and Spanish ports, though no war had been declared with either country, and informed the Dutch Government, that if the States, in order to protect their own commerce, increased their naval force, they would treat the action as one of hostility. As an Englishman, I am heartily ashamed of telling the story. It is one of undisguised tyranny, violence, oppression, practised by a strong on a weak state, in which the head of the latter was a traitor to his country's best interests. In 1779, the English commander, Fielding, captured the Dutch mercantile fleet, with four Dutch men-of-war; and in 1780, Yorke, the English ambassador at the Hague, demanded subsidies from the States, whom his government had just before plundered.

By this time, however, the English Government had overstrained the patience of all other nations. It was seen that, unless some steps were taken, England would put herself effectively into the position which Philip II. had very ineffectually assumed, and declare that the three oceans belonged to her, and to her only, and that, commerce on the part of any other people must depend on her will. Hence Catherine II. of

Russia, formulated the celebrated agreement, known as the "Armed Neutrality," in 1780. It was joined by all the principal states of Europe. Every effort was made by the English to bring about the exclusion of the Dutch from this alliance, and in this they were of course assisted by the Stadtholder. The Dutch hesitated, but in the end resolved. In 1780, England declared war on Holland, and severed a connection which had lasted for more than two centuries.

XXXVII.

FROM THE WAR OF 1781 TO THE CREATION OF MONARCHY.

THE entire indifference of the Stadtholder to national interests, and the declaration of war, with the great losses which followed on hostilities, led to the development of the party of "Patriots" in Holland. The framers and advocates of the "Armed Neutrality," it is true, took no steps to defend that country on which the brunt of the contest fell. Nay, many of the Powers treated them with less favour than they did the English. Probably they hoped to succeed to some of the Dutch possessions, and to all its trade. If so, the English were beforehand with them, for they attacked the Dutch possessions in the West Indies, at the Cape, and in India, before the rupture was known. The spirits of the Dutch was a little raised by the indecisive naval engagement of the Doggerbank in 1781. Peace was effected in 1783, but on disadvantageous terms to Holland.

Meanwhile the Patriots had compelled the Duke of Brunswick to relinquish his authority in the States,

and the Orange faction was greatly depressed. Day by day, the wretched Stadtholder lost character and influence with his unfortunate countrymen, while the Dutch contrasted the present condition of the States with that which it occupied during the two centuries of heroism of which she had fondly anticipated that William would be a present exemplar. The Patriots began to resume that authority over the councils of which the Senates had been deprived, and to revive the local guard, under the name of "schuttery," which had been all but disbanded by the Stadtholder, William complaining that his prerogative was being invaded. In this crisis, the King of Prussia interfered, to protect the interests of his niece and her husband, and though the interference came to little more than an angry protest, the Dutch learnt anew how wise their forefathers were, when more than a century before, they suspected what would ensue if their Stadtholder allied himself with the reigning houses of Europe.

In 1783 the Dutch were attacked by Joseph II., Emperor of Austria. It was owing to their efforts that the Belgian Netherlands had been taken from Spain, and made over to Austria under the treaty of Utrecht. But Joseph, rightly interpreting the financial position of Holland, and seeing how discredited the Stadtholder's government was, determined to take advantage of the situation to wrest the navigation of the Scheldt from the Dutch, and secure himself, if he pleased, an easy entry into Holland. In 1784, war seemed impending, and the States made some effort to enlist soldiers, and to collect army stores. But the

emperor's threat came to nothing. The house of Austria has always depended for its existence on foreign alliances and foreign subsidies, and Joseph was not popular with other European governments. He therefore patched up a peace with the States, the principal condition of which was that the Dutch should pay him some money.

The Patriot or States party was meanwhile increasingly hostile to the unpopular Stadtholder, and set to work to deprive him of all the prerogatives which he had usurped, and even of those which the States had granted, forty years before, to his father. Certain members of the national party having been insulted by the Orange mob at the Hague, and William having connived at the disorder, the States took away from him the command of the Hague garrison, and on his threatening never to return to the seat of government, unless his rights were restored, adhered to their resolution. As they had taken this step, they went further, and in particular at Amsterdam, resumed those military and naval functions which had been previously ceded to the Stadtholder.

The power of the Stadtholder was gradually being curtailed, and his only chance of his retaining a shadow of it was in the strength of the Orange party, and in what was virtually civil war, the forcible restraint of malcontents. The States answered his action by deposing him from his office of Captain-General. It is true that, under the pretence of mediation, the sovereigns of England, of Prussia, and even of France, counselled moderation in the crisis, and perhaps had the advice of the French ambas-

sador, Rayneval, been accepted, an accommodation might have followed. But the Prussian wife of William was obstinate, and demanded that the States should abandon the position which they had taken up. This was out of the question, and the breach became wider, the Stadtholder being held up to the public execration of his fellow countrymen as an unfaithful minister, "whose heart was as corrupt as his mind was narrow." The States made his property liable to land-tax, examined his accounts and allowances, and substituted the arms of the States for those of the house of Orange in public documents, on the regimental colours, and even on furniture.

But while it was comparatively easy to circumscribe the powers of the Stadtholder, and even to reduce him to the position of first citizen in the Republic or less, it was not easy to reconstruct the constitution of the Republic. There were leaders of the popular party who thought that enough had been done; there were others who wished to put the constitution on a more popular basis; there were others who desired to proscribe the whole Orange party, to make the use of its party cries and party emblems a capital offence, even to prohibit the exhibition of orange-coloured flowers, and the sale of carrots, unless the roots were decently hidden. And, above all, the smaller states became jealous of Holland, and seemed inclined to retrace their steps. The Stadtholder thought his opportunity was come, and began civil war in 1787.

On the plea that an insult had been offered to his sister, who had been prevented from stirring up the

Orange party at the Hague, the King of Prussia now took part in the war, and invaded Holland. Utrecht was abandoned, and the Stadtholder was restored to his full authority. Amsterdam was besieged and capitulated. Even the English Whigs expressed their satisfaction at the result. The Patriot party seemed to be extinguished. The Dutch were under English influence, and the French Government was accused of bad faith and poltroonery. The leaders of the Patriots were declared incapable of serving their country hereafter, and every one was constrained to wear the Orange badge.

I have given these wearisome and miserable details of misgovernment and abortive attempts at reform, because they form a necessary prelude to the events which followed In 1789 the French constitution was remodelled, and, for a time, good and wise men rejoiced over the reform of what had become the most detestable government in Europe. The Stadtholder's son contracted a fresh alliance with the house of Prussia; but Holland took no part in the League of Pilnitz, a league which was to prove so disastrous to the States which joined it, when they forced revolutionary France to act on the defensive, and finally justified its reprisals. The Stadtholder, of course, as soon as possible joined the alliance of the European sovereigns. But the Patriots determined to welcome the French. The winter of 1794–95 gave them the wished-for opportunity. The Stadtholder fled to England, and the Dutch revolution was effected.

It is very possible that many of those who formed and developed the French revolution were men of

high purposes and patriotic ends. But France was bankrupt, its finance aggravated the mischief, and at first, constrained to defend itself, and then led to aggressive war, it naturally made war support itself. The Dutch paid dearly for the revenge which they took on William. Their trade was ruined, their commercial integrity violently destroyed, their resources squandered for objects which did not concern them, their colonies wrested from them. They were erected into a kingdom, dependent on the French Empire, and ruled by one of Napoleon's brothers. In 1813 came a counter revolution, when Holland, despairing of republican institutions, resolved to accept a limited monarchy. It was perhaps impossible, in the existing temper of European governments, to adopt any other course. When Europe was remodelled, at the final termination of the great continental war, Belgium was added to Holland, and the principle of the Ghent pacification was temporarily enforced by the authority of Europe. Holland recovered most of her dependencies.

These had been temporarily occupied by the English during the time that Holland had been a dependency of France. It was inevitable that they should be, for they were virtually French possessions during the French occupancy. But two of them, Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope, were retained by the English after the war was over, contrary, as I think, to good faith and justice. It is doubtful whether England has gained anything by the Cape Settlement. The country is essentially Dutch, and the dissatisfaction of the Dutch settlers with the English Government

has led to secession, revolt, and war, under circumstances which has conferred no credit on the intrusive government, and have been no particular honour to English arms. And though in our time Holland cannot, even if she had her old spirit and resources, vie with the great military Powers of Europe, as she once did, her reputation is still high, and her energy is renewed.

XXXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

I HAVE now arrived at the end of the object which I had before me, which was to give a brief narrative of the manner in which the Dutch people vindicated their nationality, and were for a long time the very centre of modern European history. In my opinion, the story of this heroic people is entirely worthy of study, and, as I have stated, is more romantic and more instructive than that of the famous stand which Greece made against Persia, near twenty-four centuries ago. The debt which civilization and liberty owe to these people is greater than that which is due to any other race, however little it may be known and acknowledged. The administration of the United Provinces, no doubt, committed some grave errors, which were visited over severely upon it. But there was a time when these errors were deemed to be political wisdom, and the English Government, which treated the Dutch more ungenerously, more unjustly, and more unwisely than any other European Power did, clung to these errors after they had been discarded in the Netherlands.

KUENEN.

In a brief sketch like this the difficulty is, not what one should say, but what one should omit, without impairing the historical lesson, which the narrative of Dutch heroism and enterprize should and can convey. It is true that towards the end of the eighteenth century, Holland was assailed by jealous rivals, into whose hands their own chief magistrate played. But it is also true that after sixty years of humiliation, the Dutch have reasserted themselves, and though a small people, hemmed in by large military governments, they hold a considerable place among nations. Some scribbler, the other day, who knows little of what they were, and nothing of what they are, has called them an effete nation. Nothing can be more untrue. They are fortunately disabled from wasting their substance on militarism, and they are, and I trust will be, protected by the public conscience of Europe, as they should be, in so far as political wisdom goes for anything, by the persistent goodwill of Great Britain. But I do not find that in any department of enterprize, of commercial integrity, and of intellectual vigour, the Dutchman of to-day is behind any European nation whatever, or even the race which achieved so remarkable a position in the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. I need only quote the name of Kuenen.

I have been constrained in the necessary task of selecting the materials for this sketch, to omit much that might have been said about the place which bygone generations of Dutchmen have done for progress and for letters. The language of the people is a dialect, spoken by the inhabitants of what is only a

corner of Europe. But the Dutch are justly proud of their native poets, of Vondel and of Katz, for instance, from the former of whom, it is said, our Milton did not disdain to borrow, if we do not accept the alternative, that two persons of nearly the same age, not only thought alike, but expressed their thoughts in nearly the same words; in the latter of whom the Dutch allege that they have a lyrist whose poems rank with the best.

In the early days of the Republic, Holland, and especially Amsterdam and Rotterdam, held the printing-presses of Europe, whatever may be said of the modern claim that this great invention was made at Haarlem. The Elzevirs were the first publishers of cheap editions, and thereby aided in disseminating not the new learning only, but all that the world knew at the time. From Holland came the first optical instruments, the best mathematicians, the most intelligent philosophers, as well as the boldest and most original thinkers. Holland is the origin of scientific medicine and rational therapeutics. From Holland came the new agriculture, which has done so much for social life, horticulture, and floriculture. The Dutch taught modern Europe navigation. They were the first to explore the unknown seas, and many an island and cape which their captains discovered has been renamed after some one who got all his knowledge by their research, and appropriated the fruit of his predecessor's labours. They have been as much plundered in the world of letters, as they have been in commerce and politics.

Holland taught the Western nations finance, per-

JACOB KATZ.

haps no great boon. But they also taught commercial honour, the last and the hardest lesson which nations learn. They inculcated free trade, a lesson which is nearly as hard to learn, if not harder, since the conspiracy against private right is watchful, incessant, and, as some would make us believe, respectable. They raised a constant, and for a long time ineffectual, protest against the barbarous custom of privateering, and the dangerous doctrine of contraband in war, a doctrine which, if carried out logically, would allow belligerents to interdict the trade of the world. The Dutch are the real founders of what people call international law, or the rights of nations. They made mistakes, but they made fewer than their neighbours made. The benefits which they conferred were incomparably greater than the errors which they committed.

There is nothing more striking in the Dutch character than the fact that, after a brief and discreditable episode, the States were an asylum for the persecuted. The Jews, who were contemned because they were thrifty, plundered because they were rich, and harassed because they clung tenaciously to their ancient faith and customs, found an asylum in Holland; and some of them perhaps, after they originated and adopted, with the pliability of their race, a Teutonic alias, have not been sufficiently grateful to the country which sheltered them. The Jansenists, expelled from France, found a refuge in Utrecht, and more than a refuge, a recognition, when recognition was a dangerous offence.

There is no nation in Europe which owes more to

Holland than Great Britain does. The English, I regret to say, were for a long time, in the industrial history of modern civilization, the stupidest and most backward nation in Europe. There was, to be sure, a great age in England during the reign of Elizabeth, and that of the first Stewart king. But it was brief indeed. In every other department, of art, of agriculture, of trade, we learnt our lesson from the Hollanders. How we repaid them I have striven to show, I hope in no unpatriotic strain. Our own Selden, who learnt all his learning from Dutch sources, never lets an opportunity slip of gibing at his literary benefactors and teachers.

I must not permit myself to linger on the modern merits of restored and revived Holland. I doubt whether any other small European race, after passing through the trials which it endured from the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle to the conclusion of the continental war, ever had so entire a recovery. The chain of its history, to be sure, was broken, and cannot, in the nature of things, be welded together. But there is still left to Holland the boast and the reality of her motto, "Luctor et emergo."

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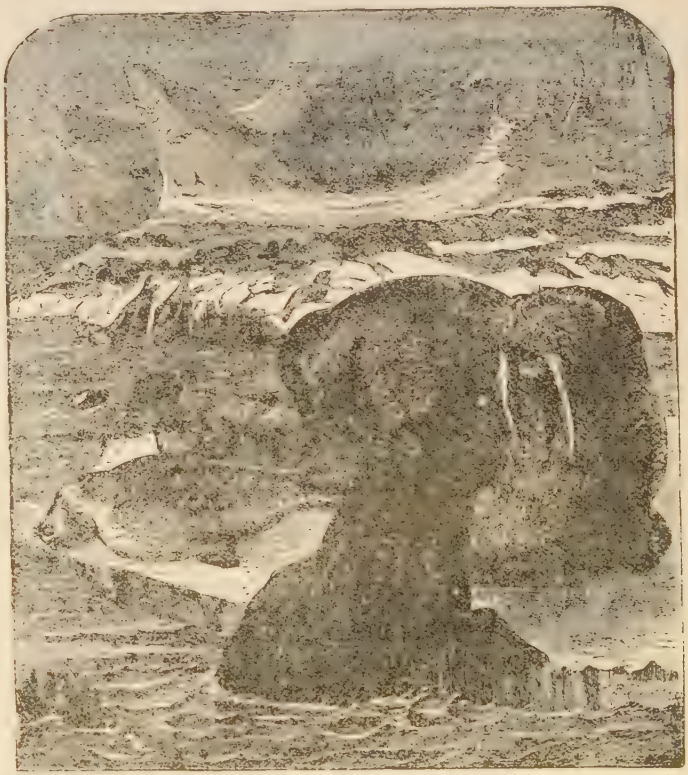

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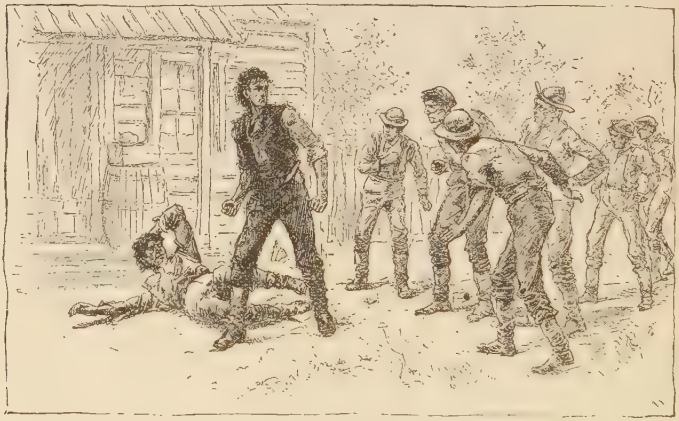

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